WORLD CUP QUALIFIERS Road to Russia 2018

World Soccer®

GLOBAL FOOTBALL SINCE 1960

JULY 2017

ENGLAND WIN THE WORLD CUP!

Under-20 squad celebrate in South Korea

EYEWITNESS

Confederations Cup Special

The full story from **Russia**

UNDER-21 TALENT

Germany lift European crown

Plus

// FERNANDO SANTOS Q&A
// GARCIA REPORT FALLOUT
// ARGENTINA SEASON ROUND-UP

PLAYER BIOGRAPHY

MARCELO

Brazil's attacking gem

UKSOCCERSHOP

NUMBER ONE FOR FOOTBALL SHIRTS

INFO@UKSOCCERSHOP.COM - 0844 332 1221

SALE

UP TO 75% OFF SELECTED STOCK!

OUR BIGGEST SALE YET!

ITALY 2016-17
HOME SHIRT
WAS £59.99
NOW £19.99

GERMANY 2016-17
HOME SHIRT
WAS £54.99
NOW £24.99

SPAIN 2016-17
HOME SHIRT
WAS £54.99
NOW £15.99

REAL MADRID UCL 2015-16
HOME KIDS SHIRT (RONALDO 7)
WAS £59.99
NOW £19.99

PSG 2016-17
HOME KIDS SHIRT
WAS £47.99
NOW £29.99

MAN UNITED 2015-16
HOME KIDS SHIRT
WAS £44.99
NOW £19.99

CHELSEA 2015-16
THIRD KIDS SHIRT
WAS £44.99
NOW £14.99

AC MILAN 2015-16
HOME KIDS SHIRT
WAS £44.99
NOW £22.99

BARCELONA 2016-17
TRAINING SHIRT
WAS £39.99
NOW £26.99

SPAIN 2014-15
AWAY KIDS SHIRT
WAS £44.99
NOW £15.00

WWW.UKSOCCERSHOP.COM

WorldSoccer
Global football intelligence since 1960

Contents

July 2017

FEATURES

40 Player biography
Marcelo

46 World Cup 2018
The qualifying campaign

THE WORLD THIS MONTH

People in the news...on and off the pitch

4 **In pictures**
10 **From the editor**
15 **Jim Holden** Totti and Terry say goodbye
16 **Jonathan Wilson** no more full-backs
18 **Keir Radnedge** No to Uruguay 2030
20 **Headliners** Serie A and organised crime
21 **Ins & outs** people on the move
22 **Brian Glanville** England not good enough

EYEWITNESS

26 **Confederations Cup**
34 **Northern Cyprus**

TALENT SCOUT

38 **Under-20 World Cup**

FACE TO FACE

56 **Fernando Santos**

WOMEN'S FOOTBALL

60 **Euro 2017 preview**

ARCHIVES

62 **July 1961**

THE GREAT MATCHES

82 **Brazil v Sweden, 1958**

Follow World Soccer online
FOOTBALL 24-7

Follow @worldsoccermag Like World Soccer Magazine

SAVE MONEY ON WorldSoccer
Exclusive subscription offer.
See page 8

World Service

Exclusive reports from our worldwide network of correspondents

66 **Under-20 World Cup** England worthy winners
68 **Argentina** Boca's latest triumph lacks sparkle
71 **Germany** mixed reaction to Chinese deal
72 **Euro under-21s** second-string are champions
74 **Curacao** historic Caribbean Cup success

PLUS 70 **Global diary** 76 **Squads** 77 **Results, tables, fixtures**

In Pictures

The global game caught on camera

ARGENTINA...Boca Juniors players celebrate winning the title after the final match of the season, against Union at the Bombonera Stadium

USA...New York City's Ben Sweat celebrates scoring against New York Red Bulls

BRAZIL...Ze Roberto of Palmeiras grimaces during a game against Fluminense

AUSTRALIA...Tim Cahill of Australia prior to the friendly against Brazil at the Melbourne Cricket Ground

RUSSIA...Ryan Thomas of New Zealand and Hector Herrera of Mexico clash during their Confederations Cup group game

WALES... Kieran Smith (left) of Bala Town battles against Vaduz in the Europa League qualifiers

HOLLAND...Austria's Katharina Schiechtl is outnumbered in a friendly against Holland

Subscribe today

from just

£22.99

SAVE UP TO 30%

+

Monthly extras, Exclusive for subscribers.

Rewards

Subscribe today and join Rewards for free to get even more from your magazine. Handpicked offers, unique giveaways and unmissable prizes.

Join Rewards at **worldsoccer.com/rewards**

Subscribe online at
worldsoccersubs.com/11ZK

Complete the coupon opposite

THE DIRECT DEBIT GUARANTEE: This Guarantee is offered by all banks and building societies that accept instructions to pay Direct Debits · If there are any changes to the amount, date or frequency of your Direct Debit Time Inc. (UK) Ltd will notify you 10 working days in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed. If you request Time Inc. (UK) Ltd to collect a payment, confirmation of the amount and date will be given to you at the time of the request. · If an error is made in the payment of your Direct Debit, by Time Inc. (UK) Ltd or your bank or building society you are entitled to a full and immediate refund of the amount paid from your bank or building society – If you receive a refund you are not entitled to, you must pay it back when Time Inc. (UK) Ltd asks you to · You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by simply contacting your bank or building society. Written confirmation may be required. Please also notify us.

WORLD SOCCER SUBSCRIPTION OFFER

HERE'S THE DEAL:

- Pay less than at the newsagent
- 13 issues a year delivered direct to your door
- Enjoy exclusive offers with Rewards. Visit worldsoccer.com/rewards

0330 333 1113

Quote code: 11ZK

Monday to Saturday from 8am to 6pm (UK time)

The Rewards scheme is available for all active print subscribers of magazines published by Time Inc. (UK) Ltd, free of charge. Digital subscribers also get access as long as the subscription has been purchased directly through the publishers at magazinesdirect.com. For full terms and conditions visit mymagazinerewards.co.uk.

Post the completed order form to: FREEPOST Time Inc

(No further address needed. No stamp required – for UK only)

YES! I would like to subscribe to World Soccer

☐ UK 6 Monthly Direct Debit: Pay only £22.99 every 6 months saving 30% (full price £33.40) TOP OFFER

☐ 2 years (26 issues) Cheque/Credit or Debit Card- Pay only £93.49 (full price £133.58) saving 30% across the two years

☐ 1 year (13 issues) Cheque/Credit or Debit Card- Pay only £49.49 (full price £66.79) saving 25% across the year

OVERSEAS OFFERS: SAVING UP TO 35%

+44 330 333 1113 quote code 11ZK

or visit worldsoccersubs.com/11ZK

US toll free number 1 888 313 5528 (lines open Mon-Sat 7am-12 Midday Central Time)

YOUR DETAILS:

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms: Forename:

Surname:

Email:

Address:

Postcode:

Home Tel. No: (inc area code)

Mobile:

Date of Birth: D D M M Y Y Y Y

GIFT SUBSCRIPTION:

Please fill out to give more than one subscription, please supply address details on a separate sheet.

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms: Forename:

Surname:

Address:

Postcode:

CHOOSE FROM 3 EASY WAYS TO PAY:

1. **CHEQUE**

I enclose a cheque/postal order for: £_____ made payable to Time Inc. (UK) Ltd.

2. **CREDIT/DEBIT CARD**

Please debit my: ☐ Amex ☐ Visa ☐ Visa Debit ☐ Mastercard

Card No.

Expiry Date

M M Y Y

Signature: Date:

(I am over 18)

3. **DIRECT DEBIT: To pay £22.99 every 6 months by UK Direct Debit, please complete your details below:**

PAYMENT DETAILS – DIRECT DEBIT

Instruction to your bank or building society to pay by Direct Debit.

For office use only: Originators Reference – 764 221

DIRECT Debit

Name of Bank:

Address of Bank:

Postcode:

Name of Account Holder:

Sort Code: Account No:

Instruction to your Bank or Building Society Please pay Time Inc. (UK) Ltd Direct Debits from the account detailed on this Instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with Time Inc. (UK) Ltd and if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank or Building Society.

Signature: Date:

(I am over 18)

*£22.99 payable by 6 monthly Direct Debit. This price is guaranteed for the first 12 months and we will notify you in advance of any price changes. **Offer closes 31st July 2017.** Offer open to new subscribers only. Please allow up to six weeks for delivery of your first subscription issue (up to eight weeks overseas). The full subscription rate is for 1 year (13 issues) and includes postage and packaging. If the magazine ordered changes frequency per annum, we will honour the number of issues paid for, not the term of the subscription. For full terms and conditions, visit www.magazinesdirect.com/terms. For enquiries from the UK please call: 0330 333 1113, for overseas please call: +44 330 333 1113 (lines are open Monday- Saturday, 8am- 6pm UK Time) or e-mail: help@magazinesdirect.com. Calls to 0330 numbers will be charged at no more than a national landline call, and may be included in your phone providers call bundle. We will process your data in accordance with our Privacy Policy (www.timeincuk.com/privacy). By providing your information, you agree to be contacted by Time Inc. (UK) Ltd, publisher of World Soccer and other iconic media brands, with information about our goods and services and those of our carefully selected third parties. Please tick here if you do not wish to receive these messages: ☐ by email and/or SMS ☐ by post and/or telephone ☐ about carefully selected third party goods and services.

XWS Code 11ZK

FROM THE EDITOR

To the uninitiated observer, England's performances this summer – world under-20 champions, European under-21 semi-finalists, European under-17 finalists, Toulon tournament champions – suggest a nation with a fine generation of young players emerging.

Clearly, something positive is happening at the national football centre, St George's Park. Yet how many of the successful under-20 side will be given a chance in the Premier League this season and gain the experience needed to benefit England's senior side?

> How many of England's successful under-20 side will be given a chance in the Premier League?

In contrast, Germany won the Confederations Cup (page 26) and Euro Under-21s (page 72), both with severely depleted squads. In Russia, they were captained by a 23-year-old, Julian Draxler.

England's star man in Korea, Dominic Solanke (page 66), left Chelsea for Liverpool this summer having never played for the first team. He is just one of many talented players, from all around the world, whose progress stalled at a Premier League club. Germany have shown that developing talent is more about attitude than money. It is a lesson that English football is yet to learn.

Gavin Hamilton, Editor

10 SIGNIFICANT EVENTS THIS MONTH

1 Garcia report published p10
2 Germany win Confederations Cup p33
3 Video replays at Confederations Cup p30
4 Germany win European Under-21 Championship p72
5 England win Under-20 World Cup in South Korea p66
6 Boca Juniors win title in Argentina p68
7 Iran qualify for the 2018 World Cup p53
8 Curacao win Caribbean Cup p74
9 Serie A and organised crime p20
10 Summer transfers p21

SWITZERLAND

Leak forces FIFA to finally publish Garcia report

The contentious Garcia Report into the scandal-scarred 2018/2022 World Cup bid process reveals a tawdry tale of greed, power and arrogant self-entitlement among the men running the game.

FIFA published the report after an attempt to keep it under lock and key was pushed to the point of ridicule by its leak to German paper *Bild*.

American lawyer Michael Garcia was appointed as FIFA's first ethics investigator in 2012 with a brief to examine events which led up to the World Cup awards to Russia and Qatar by the executive committee in December 2010. Subsequently FIFA published only a summary, by then ethics judge Hans-Joachim Eckert, and Garcia quit in anger in 2014.

Eckert and Garcia's deputy and then successor, Cornel Borbely, were sacked from their ethics chamber roles at the behest of president Gianni Infantino at the May 2017 FIFA Congress in Bahrain.

Hence the first significant act undertaken by new investigator Maria Claudia Rojas and adjudicatory chief Vassilios Skouris was to order immediate publication of the 430-page report.

The full report vindicates Eckert's assessment that no firm case for direct corruption can be levelled against any bidder.

Certainly several bids (including but not only Qatar), pushed the bid's flabby rules to the limit; others (Australia and England) fell over themselves in humiliating attempts to accommodate the demands of notorious

Sacked...Hans-Joachim Eckert (left) and Cornel Borbely (right)

"The club is very happy with the renewal and commitment of Messi, the best player in history"

Barcelona announce Lionel Messi is to sign a four-year contract extension

Anger...Michael Garcia

Bid team...(from left) Prince William, David Cameron and David Beckham

CONCACAF president Jack Warner; Japan went over the top with personal gifts; and South Korea undermined its own bid with a blatantly personalised "global football fund" proposal.

Garcia reveals childish behaviour from Spanish federation president Angel Villar and the late Argentinian power-broker Julio Grondona in challenging his authority to question them. He lays bare the embarrassing attempts of German ExCo member Franz Beckenbauer to wriggle out of answering questions. And he had no illusions about the self-serving "liaison" work of ex-Barcelona president Sandro Rosell who had close links to both Qatar and Brazilian FIFA member Ricardo Teixeira.

The least troublesome bid was Belgium/Holland, whose response to Garcia's investigatory work is summed up in four lines, ending: "No issues were identified."

Most of the members of the FIFA ExCo who voted for Russia and Qatar in 2010 have been subsequently either banned by the ethics committee for other reasons or forced out of the game.

Winner...Qatar's Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani raises the World Cup

Embarrassing... Franz Beckenbauer

The report's two precise investigatory analysis was not contributed by Garcia, however, but by Swiss lawyer Borbely. The latter stepped into the breach after Garcia recused himself from investigating bids from his "home" United States and Russia from which he was barred after previous, unconnected legal work for the US government.

Borbely's two reports deal with bid mechanics and narratives, whereas Garcia's report focuses heavily on the behaviour of the individual FIFA ExCo members, some of the bid directors and their advisers and consultants.

The Russians will be satisfied at emerging with a comparatively clean bill of health from the report.

Borbely reports the absence of a significant chunk of their bid correspondence after the return of their leased computers. But then, Russia was not the only bid which could not provide bid correspondence. Most bidders had gaps somewhere in their records.

The interest of *Bild* in the original leaking of the report is clear in the passages which focus directly on the role of tarnished German hero Beckenbauer and his reliance on close aide Fedor Radmann. Beckenbauer was always considered a supporter of the Russian bid for 2018 while Radmann was a well-paid consultant to the Australia 2022 effort.

Beckenbauer was a *Bild* columnist until his retirement last year amid controversy around his role with Germany's own winning bid for the 2006 World Cup.

FIFA, seeking to justify its sudden rush to publication said: "[Publication] had been called for on numerous occasions by FIFA president Gianni Infantino in the past and also supported by the FIFA Council since its meeting in Mexico City in May 2016.

"Despite these regular requests, it is worth noting that the former chairpersons of the ethics committee, Cornel Borbely and Hans-Joachim Eckert, had always refused to publish it.

"The ethics committee will meet in its full composition under the new chairpersons for the first time next week, and it was already planned to use this opportunity to discuss the publication of the report.

"However, as the document has been illegally leaked to a German newspaper, the new chairpersons have requested the immediate publication of the full report (including the reports on the Russian and US bid teams, which were conducted by Mr Borbely alone) in order to avoid the dissemination of any misleading information.

"For the sake of transparency, FIFA welcomes the news that this report has now been finally published."

Keir Radnedge

"Our preparation for those finals was extremely basic. Nor did we have any structure to our game"

Jordan Lukaku blames then-boss Marc Wilmots for Belgium's loss to Wales in the quarter-finals of Euro 2016

SAUL Niguez (Spain)

The Atletico Madrid midfielder was irresistible at the European Under-21 Championship, scoring with an acrobatic bicycle kick against Macedonia, finishing a memorable solo run with a searing shot against Portugal and putting Italy to the sword with a hat-trick in the semi-finals.

Germany, though, found a way to keep him quiet in the Final, so in the end he had to make do with the consolation prize of a runners-up medal and the Golden Boot as the tournament's top scorer.

Dubbed "Hurricane Saul" by Iberian daily *Marca*, he is an all-terrain marvel. Non-stop and ubiquitous, he is organiser, passer, runner, grafter and marksman.

An Atletico regular for the past three seasons, he will not be easily prised away from the *Rojiblancos*. On retuning from the Euros, he agreed a five-year contract extension, tying him to the club until 2026 and now has a whopping €150m release clause. Which is bad news indeed for the likes of Barcelona, Manchester City and Manchester United.

Solo...Saul is about to open the scoring against Portugal

"I like to get drunk. I am a power drinker"

Newcastle United owner, Mike Ashley

Diego SOUZA (Brazil)
Scored the fastest goal in the 103-year history of the Brazil national team, scoring after 11 seconds of their friendly against Australia.

Julian DRAXLER (Germany)
The 23-year-old captained a second-string national squad to victory at the Confederations Cup in Russia.

Elson HOOI (Curacao)
The diminutive attacking midfielder-cum-winger won the tournament MVP award at the Caribbean Cup after scoring two goals in the Final and winning Gevaro Nepomuceno's penalty in the semi-final. Formerly on the books of NAC Breda and currently a free agent having struggled to settle at club level, he recently told Dutch media that he is seeking a move back to the Eredivisie.

Jeremy TOLJAN (Germany)
The jet-heeled Hoffenheim right-back was one of the stars of Germany's European Under-21 triumph, playing a key role in building his country's attacks on the right flank.

Dominic SOLANKE (England)
Voted player of the tournament as England won the world under-20 title in South Korea. Prior to the tournament, the Chelsea stiker was snapped up by Liverpool, moving to Anfield in a £3m deal.

HEROES & VILLAINS

CLAUDIO BRAVO

The keeper was the hero of Chile's semi-final win in the Confederations Cup when he saved all three Portugal penalties in the shoot-out that followed a 0-0 draw in Kazan.

Saviour...Chile keeper Claudio Bravo

ANTE VUKUSIC

The former Pescara and Croatia striker, who now plays his club football with Tosno in Russia, revealed that he played for a number of years with just one lung functioning. Italian doctors thought that he had a back problem, but when he moved to the Russian club they "realised everything was fine with my back, but I had a lung problem". He says: "The doctor told me it is a miracle how I was able to play for several years with only one part of my lung functioning." The 26-year-old has since undergone surgery on his right lung, leaving him out of action for three months.

Bet...Davide Nicola (left)

DAVIDE NICOLA

Crotone's coach completed a 1,300km bike ride, travelling the length of Italy, after promising his players that he would do so if they avoided relegation from Serie A. He made the deal in April, when his side looked certain to go down, having won just three of their 29 games. However, after winning six of their last nine matches, they avoided the drop by two points.

HUDDERSFIELD TOWN

Back in the English top flight for the first time since 1972, the club rewarded loyal supporters by offering season tickets for their forthcoming Premier League campaign at just £100 to anyone who has held one since 2009.

OSCAR

The former Chelsea midfielder was handed an eight-match ban and fined £4,625 by the Chinese Football Association for his part in a mass brawl during a game between his team, Shanghai SIPG, and Guangzhou R&F. According to the referee's report: "Oscar offended opposing players in an immoral manner, leading to a massive brawl which has had a very bad influence on the Chinese Super League's reputation."

Brawl...Oscar (on ground)

LUCAS FONSECA

In a Brazilian league game against Flamengo, the Bahia centre-back cleared the ball before crashing into Flamengo's Paulo Guerrero. As Guerrero turned, Fonseca fell to the ground with an exaggerated backflip, claiming he had been fouled when there was minimal contact between the players. Having been shown a yellow card six minutes earlier, he was rightly given a second one by referee Igor Junior Benevenuto and promptly left the field.

KLEBER

The Coritiba captain was handed a 15-game ban after swinging his left arm into the face of Bahia defender Edson, for which he was given a yellow card. Later, when the pair clashed again, he seemed to spit in the Bahia man's face, and was promptly shown a red card.

Banned...Kleber

GONZALO JARA

The Chilean defender somehow managed to escape with a yellow card rather than a red in the Confederations Cup Final – despite the referee using VAR to review his elbow assault on Germany's Timo Werner.

"It's indecent to think that someone could have done such a thing without anyone knowing"

Rosangela Santos, the daughter of Brazil legend Garrincha, after her late father's body was secretly exhumed from a cemetery in his home town

GOALS we'd like to see again

1 CRISTIANO RONALDO
Portugal v Russia
Begins and finishes a crisp, flowing team move by steering home a far-post header beyond the Russian keeper.

2 JHON CIFUENTES
Ecuador v El Salvador
Produces a spectacular near-post volley following a cross by Pedro Velasco.

3 LUIS SOLIGNAC
Chicago Fire v Saint Louis
A clever backheel flick loops over the Saint Louis goalkeeper and into the far corner during a US Open Cup tie.

4 LORENZO PELLEGRINI
Italy U21s v Denmark U21s
Bicycle kick from 12 yards into the far bottom corner.

5 BRUMA
Portugal U21s v Spain U21s
Hits a volley into the far corner from the edge of the area.

6 SUNIL CHHETRI
India v Kyrgyzstan
Runs half the length of the pitch, plays a return pass with a team-mate, then finishes with a low shot in an AFC Asian Cup qualifier.

WINNERS

GUINEA
Beat 2015 champions Ivory Coast for the first time in 23 years and 11 meetings, winning 3-2 in a Nations Cup qualifier.

GERMANY
Won the European Under-21 title and crowned Confederations Cup champions in the space of three days.

IRAN
Became the third team to secure a place at next year's World Cup finals, alongside host nation Russia and Brazil.

ENGLAND UNDER-21s
Kept up a long-held English tradition when they lost to Germany on penalties in the Euro semi-finals.

RUSSIA
The Confederations Cup hosts were beaten by Portugal and Russia and failed to make it out of the group stage.

JAMAICA
Beaten by Curacao in the Final of the Caribbean Cup, two years after their amazing run to the Final of the CONCACAF Gold Cup.

LOSERS

Jim HOLDEN

AT THE HEART OF THE GAME

Goodbye is the hardest word for Terry and Totti

The rain was teeming down on a muddy pitch in London's suburbia as eager 13-year-olds played their hearts out, watched by scouts from all the big clubs. One kid shone amid the madding crowd; a cultured but robust central midfielder.

My brief was to write a newspaper article about a day in the life of a senior scout from Manchester United. His was to deliver talent to Old Trafford.

"Who knows whether John Terry will make the grade?" said the experienced chap from United as he watched the young star of the show. "But he will get an invite from us now."

In fact, Terry had already been lured by Chelsea, and even a personal meeting shortly afterwards with Alex Ferguson did not change the destination of his monumental career.

That was back in 1993 – the same year that Francesco Totti made his debut at the age of 16 for home-town Roma in the maelstrom of Serie A.

This summer, after long one-club careers, Terry and Totti have had to consider their options after winning so many of the game's great prizes.

Neither man was required any longer as a player by his club. Neither could easily let go of playing.

They may be old sweats now, but Terry and Totti have never lost their youthful love of the game. That's one reason why they are so admired. So the question this summer has been would they retire? And the decision for both has been torture.

Terry received offers from a batch of clubs once his decision to stop at Chelsea was announced and in July he signed a 12-month deal with Championship side Aston Villa.

This is what big-name players used to do – using their experience and craft to help players and clubs in a lower league, where slowing legs could be more easily accommodated. Kevin Keegan's revitalisation of Newcastle United is a classic example.

Likewise, I vividly remember Joe Jordan turning up at Bristol City and walking across the car park in a big sheepskin coat to the astonishment of all around. "Jaws" instantly sparked a run to the Third Division promotion play-offs.

> "Terry and Totti have never lost their youthful love of the game. It's one reason why they are so admired"

Jordan's presence, character and hunger rubbed off on players at the club and it was a decision he never regretted despite previous fame at Leeds, Manchester United and Milan.

Terry's move to Villa is surely better than winding him down gently in the Chinese Super League or the MLS across the pond.

Over...Roma bid farewell to Francesco Totti

Totti faced a similar dilemma after his final playing season at Roma at the age of 40 ended with an afternoon of kaleidoscopic emotions at Stadio Olimpico.

While Terry was respected for his forceful defending and leadership on the field at Chelsea, he was never venerated in the extraordinary way that Totti was at Roma – and more widely across football in Italy.

In one of the final games of the season the home crowd at Milan jeered because Totti was not introduced as a sub. They craved to see the 2006 World Cup winner one last time and to pay personal tribute.

Talk to fans of Roma and they wished he would go on forever. He has been idolised like no other, with his face adorning so many walls across the city. He could do no wrong – and they had no problem if he chose to continue playing elsewhere at New York Cosmos or even down the divisions in Italy.

The club offered him a role on the technical staff, and that was tempting too.

Everywhere the sense was that Totti was torn between the powerful bond to Roma and his enthusiasm to keep his boots on.

Some observers see sadness in this sight of veteran players fighting the eternal battle with Old Father Time.

Not for me. No, it's far better than the cynicism of too many modern footballers.

We want and we need heroes who revel in the thrill of playing the game – whether they are teenagers who bound around in the rain or titans ambling in the autumn of their days. WS

Gone...John Terry said farewell to Chelsea this summer before agreeing to join Aston Villa next season

Jonathan WILSON

TECHNICALLY SPEAKING

The end of the full-back as we know it

The English term "full-back" has been a misnomer for a long time now. If those players who play on the flanks of a back four are backs at all, they are certainly not fully so.

Numerous English football terms survive in Spanish and Portuguese but not, significantly, "full-back". Instead, the word used for that player is "lateral".

The longer time has gone on, and players such as Marcelo and Dani Alves have begun to define the position, the more appropriate that Spanish and Portuguese usage has come to seem. After all, what is certain about the position is its width, not its depth.

When England met Scotland in the first international, in 1872, they played with one full-back, two half-backs and seven forwards, and were mildly scandalised by Scotland's preference for two full-backs, two half-backs and six forwards.

For the next half-century, pretty much everyone played with a pair of full-backs, and they were the furthest back outfield players on the pitch. Although they had begun to push higher up the pitch in order to play an offside trap, they were still first and foremost backs.

The change began with the coming of the W-M (3-2-2-3) in response to the 1925 amendment to the offside law. In Britain, the centre-half dropped back between the full-backs, whose role now was to pick up the opposing wingers.

But after Brazil won the World Cup in 1958 using a 4-2-4 formation, the role of the full-back changed utterly.

Over the decade that followed, the back four became commonplace in English football and that was confirmed by the national side winning the 1966 World Cup with a 4-4-2 line-up.

Yet the idea still remained that those players who lined up on the outside of the back four were defenders and their primary job was to stop the opposition.

Brazilian football, however, had no such preconceptions and their wide defenders are – and always have been – midfielders.

It is, then, perhaps no coincidence that three of the four full-backs who played in this year's Champions League Final between Juventus and Real Madrid were Brazilian – even though Juve's Dani Alves spent most of the game playing on the right-hand side of a lopsided 4-2-3-1 formation rather than as an orthodox wing-back.

The idea that the full-backs should attack is implicit in the 4-2-4 set-up as there is space in front of them and they need to get forward to support the two central midfielders.

Nilton Santos, Brazil's left-back in the 1958 World Cup, was perhaps the first great attacking full-back. Giacinto Facchetti and Silvio Marzolini soon followed. Even in conservative Britain, the full-backs began to get forward. Ray Wilson, for instance, was far more adventurous than any of his predecessors at left-back in the national side. And one of the ways in which Celtic overwhelmed Internazionale in the 1967 European Cup Final was by getting their full-backs, Jim Craig and Tommy Gemmell, forward.

As time has passed, the full-back has become increasingly important as an attacking player. For a long time it was common for one full-back to get forward while the other sat.

The great Inter side of the 1960s, for instance, had Facchetti pushing

Team work... Juventus' Dani Alves (left) and Andrea Barzagli try to stop Isco of Real Madrid

> It's hard to think of a high-class full-back these days who isn't attack-minded – which in turn perhaps explains the return of a back three

First...Nilton Santos

up on the left but Tarcisio Burgnich – effectively a man-marker in a right-central position – an entirely unattacking right-back, balanced by having Jair or Angelo Domenghini shuttling back from a right-wing position as a *tornante* (a "returner"). That is pretty much how Dani Alves played in this year's Champions League Final, with Andrea Barzagli as his Burgnich.

Increasingly, though, both full-backs tend to get forward, or one will be so attacking that he plays almost as a midfielder. Look at a heat-map of Alves when he was at Barcelona and was only in the loosest sense a defensive player. His job was to support Lionel Messi.

For teams that play a radical press-and-possess game, which is how Pep Guardiola likes his sides to operate, that is natural; after all, they spend most of their time in the opposition half. They defend not as individuals but with coalitions that pin their opponent back.

But attacking full-backs aren't just a preserve of Guardiola. They are everywhere now and it's hard to think of a high-class full-back these days who isn't attack-minded – which in turn perhaps explains the return of a back three.

When full-backs get forward, the back four is often a back two. Adding an extra man to the defensive line, particularly when that line is then protected by two midfield holders – as was the case at Chelsea this season – is a logical reinforcement.

The result is an apparent paradox by which a back three is more defensive than a back four but the issue is really one of terminology. WS

Pushing up...Giacinto Facchetti

REPORTS WE COULDN'T MAKE UP

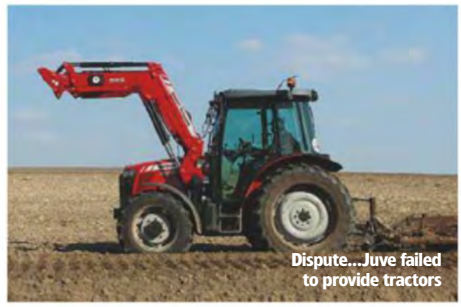
1 AN AGRICULTURAL APPROACH

Juventus striker Moise Kean could leave the Serie A side next year – because they can't afford to buy his dad some tractors.

According to Biorou Kean, his son could walk away on his 18th birthday in February after the club broke a contractual promise.

"Juventus offered a contract of €700,000-a-year, which was fine," says Kean Snr. "The problem is they had also promised me some tractors for my agricultural business in the Ivory Coast, but now they say there is no budget for them.

"I own several hectares of land in the Ivory Coast which I would like to cultivate with rice and corn."



Dispute...Juve failed to provide tractors

Deal...Juve's Moise Kean

2 PSYCHIC DUTIES

Ever since Paul the Octopus predicted results at the 2010 World Cup in South Africa, no tournament is complete unless it has a psychic animal to choose a winner of each match.

The recent Confederations Cup kept up the tradition with Achilles the cat and Nika the polar bear.

Results were mixed to say the least, with Achilles predicting a Russia win against New Zealand, while Nika managed to get Germany beating Australia correct.

But how do they pick a draw?

Feline confident ...pundit Achilles

3 ANYONE FOR TENNIS?

Former Italy and Milan defender Paolo Maldini recently teamed up with tennis coach Stefano Landonio to compete in an ATP Challenger Tour event in Milan.

Maldini, now 49, won 126 caps and lifted the Champions League in his career and was partnered in the doubles by Landonio, who is three years younger and was once ranked 975 in the world.

However, the pair only got as far as the first round where they were soundly beaten 6-1, 6-1 by Dutchman David Pel and Tomasz Bednarek from Poland.

Game, set and match ...Paulo Maldini

4 WORLD CUP MOVIE

Jose de la Paz Herrera Ucles, better known as "Chelato", made history 35 years ago when he became the only Honduran-born coach to take his country to the World Cup finals.

Although they finished bottom of their group, they did draw with hosts Spain in Valencia and took a point off of Northern Ireland.

Now 77, he has made a film, called *Historia de un Trienio de Oro*, to be screened in cinemas throughout Honduras, telling the story of his achievements.

Movie man... Chelato

FIND
MORE
FREE
MAGAZINES

FREEMAGS.CC

Keir RADNEDGE

THE INSIDER

Uruguay wave goodbye to 2030 dream

Uruguay, however reluctantly, must give up on their dream of hosting a centenary World Cup in 2030. World football's movers and shakers have moved on. The idea was worthy but the practicalities of the concept always appeared shaky. Now it is dead in the political waters.

In this era of inflated sporting extravaganzas, the Uruguayans could never hope to have staged the event on their own. Hence the cosying-up to neighbours Argentina.

There was, of course, historical logic as well. Uruguay not only hosted but also won the inaugural World Cup finals in 1930, beating Argentina in the Estadio Centenario in Montevideo.

Visiting the Centenario even today it is possible to believe that not so much has changed in and around the vast bowl – barring floodlights and a lick of light blue paint – since the *Celeste*'s great day back on July 30, 1930.

But if time has stood still in the Parque Jose Batlle, the rest of the world has moved on. In 1930 everyone who wanted to play – and most Europeans did not fancy the long sea crossing – were welcome, 13 national teams to be exact, with no need for a qualifying tournament.

How the game has changed, never mind the world. Now more than 200 nations enter the inter-continental qualifiers and 48 of them will be at the 2030 finals.

Playing host is not just a matter of providing the stadia. If that were the case, Uruguay and Argentina could cope in 2030. The complication is the other stuff: the airports, the hotels, the transport demands, the technological and broadcasting stress.

And then there are the sponsors which have stuck with FIFA through thick and turbulent, corruption-riddled thin who want new markets as the reward for their loyalty. And FIFA, with all the demands for ever-increased development handouts to keep the voters becalmed, needs every last penny of sponsorship and broadcasting cash.

FIFA's governing council reinstituted rotation to provide a virtual guarantee that the United States – with Mexico and Canada tagging along for CONCACAF political comfort – will be chosen as host for 2026. The TV deal with Fox was tied up early by former FIFA secretary-general Jerome Valcke, long before he was sacked, to calm troubled waters over the US defeat by Qatar in the 2022 hosting vote.

Rotation rules out of bidding contention the host continents for the previous two World Cups, hence no Asian or European competition in view for 2026.

However, rotation is not in play for 2030, which means aggressively ambitious China – with all those eager sponsors and expanding marketplace – can bid. So can Europe, with or without rotation.

UEFA president Aleksander Ceferin made the point sharply in Cardiff on the eve of the Champions League Final. Relations between UEFA and FIFA are, to use his word, "correct" – with UEFA unimpressed, to say the least, by FIFA president Gianni Infantino's ill-mannered, ham-fisted, ungrateful replacement of ethics chamber heads Hans-Joachim Eckert and Cornel Borbely.

However, bidding for the World Cup is a different issue entirely and – however this may disappoint Transparency International and other ethics pressure groups – perceived within the game as far more important in the grand scheme of events.

France, Germany, Iberia (Portugal and Spain), Italy and the UK would all be potential runners. Either way, Asia or Europe means solid voting blocks which South America could

Time warp...the Estadio Centenario in Montevideo

Historic... Pablo Dorado (not in picture) gives Uruguay the lead in the 1930 World Cup Final

only match by edging closer to CONCACAF – FIFAGate has shown that CONMEBOL and CONCACAF were far more closely entangled than had appeared evident.

As for Uruguay, the only option would appear to be a celebratory "Rest of the World" match on an appropriate date – perhaps May 18, 2029, as the centenary of the day on which FIFA Congress awarded host rights to Uruguay, after the withdrawals of Holland, Hungary, Sweden, Italy and Spain.

This would also have the convenience of not overshadowing the imminent World Cup finals themselves. The Uruguayans might be sensibly advised, even at this early stage, to persuade FIFA's competitions and calendar committees to save the date. WS

No thanks for all Dodd's hard work

Overlooked... Moya Dodd

Sepp Blatter did not get it all wrong. For example, he was the president who forced through the addition of three women to the former FIFA executive committee.

Burundi's Lydia Nsekera was elected in 2013, with Sonia Bien-Aime (Turks & Caicos) and Moya Dodd (Australia) co-opted. Their role was to promote women in football, not only women's football.

The reform process, largely thanks to Dodd's tireless work, insisted that every confederation should elect at least one female delegate on to FIFA Council. But that has backfired on her.

Nsekera remains, while Bien-Aime was elected in her own right by CONCACAF; CONMEBOL chose Maria Sol Munoz (Ecuador); Oceania sent Sandra Fruean (American Samoa); UEFA picked little-known Italian Evelina Christillin; and Asia chose...not Dodd, but Bangladesh's Mahfuza Akhter Kiron.

Hardly the gesture of thanks Dodd deserved after all her work on behalf of not only women in football but the Asian confederation.

Former USA captain Julie Foudy led an angry chorus of disapproval. And that fury appeared ever more justified after Mahfuza scored an own goal when, in answer to a question from a reporter, she was unable to name the holders of the Women's World Cup.

JUST A SENTENCE...

The early FIFAGate fixture list has been published. Not the dates of the big matches to come this autumn but the dates on which the various bribers and money-launderers will learn their fate from the New York court that has been hearing the litany surrounding that $200m rip-off from marketing and broadcasting rights.

Some observers object to the use, coined by one of the investigators initially, of the term "FIFAGate", arguing that this was merely a local issue within the Americas.

That, however, is wrong. Using and abusing competitions, conferences and congresses all organised under the benevolent aegis of the Blatter regime was enabled by a look-the-other-way world federation which provided the power and the glory plus the connectivity.

Disgraced... Rafael Callejas (right)

Sentencing dates
August 5: Rafael Callejas (ex-Honduras President)
October 7: Alfredo Hawit (ex-CONCACAF president)

Sentencing date to be set:
October 14: Jose Hawilla (Brazilian marketing boss) and Zorana Danis (New Jersey marketing specialist)
October 28: Chuck Blazer (ex-CONCACAF general secretary)
November 18: Miguel Trujillo (match agent)

Dates to be decided or rearranged:
Luis Bedoya, Alejandro Burzaco, Roger Huguet, Sergio Jadue, Richard Lai, Fabio Tordin, Daryll Warner, Daryan Warner, Jeffrey Webb

Pleading not guilty and awaiting trial:
Aaron Davidson, Rafael Esquivel, Brayan Jimenez, Eduardo Li, Jose Maria Marin, Juan Angel Napout, Costas Takkas, Hector Trujillo.

"I have no feelings towards him. I would not go to eat with him. I go with my friends"

Former Real Madrid defender Alvaro Arbeloa on Barcelona centre-back and ex-Spain team-mate Gerard Pique

Headliner: Franco Gabrielli

Police chief exposes Serie A's criminal influence

Anti-mafia commission told Serie A links with crime is a serious issue

According to Italian police chief Franco Gabrielli, 27 per cent of Roma's season-ticket holders have a criminal record.

Gabrielli made that statement during a hearing with Italy's parliamentary anti-mafia commission in May. He added: "For more than 15 years now, we have been aware that the football industry is exposed to interference from both organised crime and everyday crooks.

"We have documented several cases of overlapping between criminal groups and sports clubs, footballers and the professional world of football.

"The thing is the criminal world sees in the football economy an opportunity to increase illegal [money] trafficking as well as to insinuate itself in a very pervasive way into the social framework."

Gabrielli made these remarks in the context of the ongoing investigation into the levels of mafia infiltration in Italian football. The presidents of Juventus (Andrea Agnelli), Lazio (Claudio Lotito), Napoli (Aurelio De Laurentis) and Genoa (Enrico Preziosi) are among those to have given testimony to the commission so far – with the matter so "delicate" that proceedings have often taken place behind closed doors

This story began four years ago when the Public Prosecutor's Office in Turin opened an investigation (Alto Piemonte) into the infiltration of the n'Drangheta (Calabrian mafia) into North Western Italy. In the course of their enquiry, investigators discovered, by chance, that Juventus may well have been infiltrated by what is now Italy's most powerful and aggressive organised crime unit.

It appears that, via contacts with hardline Ultra fans, N'Dranghetisti were able to purchase match tickets, which were then on the black market in a business worth maybe €1million a year. The logic was that the Ultras received tickets in return for peace and quiet at the stadium.

Not surprisingly, Juventus president Agnelli has repeatedly denied meeting with mafia bosses to sell tickets, as had been claimed by some media sources. In March he said: "I have never met mafia bosses. At regular intervals, as you know, I meet with all kinds of different fans, whether they're ticket-holders or ultras.

"Ultra groups are powerful and often have close ties with clubs.

"This is done in the full light of day and remains an integral part of a president's role at a football club

"If some of these people are now regarded differently by the law, this is something which, at the time, was unknown by me or any Juventus staff."

Commission...the meeting in Turin

The "now regarded differently" remark was a reference to Rocco Dominello, a member of an n'Drangheta family who allegedly met with Juventus officials and Agnelli in relation to tickets at a time when he was not under investigation for mafia-related crime. At the Alto Piemonte trial in Turin Dominello received a seven-year and nine-months prison sentence for "ticket touting".

Then there is the puzzling story of Juve ultra Raffaelo Bucci, who killed himself by jumping off a viaduct outside Turin. The day prior to his death, Bucci had testified to Turin magistrates with regard to the n'Drangheta investigation. Did he really commit suicide? Dominello told the Turin court that he collected his tickets from Bucci, saying: "I always had to pass through him..."

One thing that seems clear from the anti-mafia commission's work is that the Juventus case is almost certainly the very tip of the iceberg.

The commission president, Rosy Bindi, has already gone on record to say that there exists "the very real problem" of a "grey-zone" relationship between clubs and organised crime, often local organised crime, in relation to ticket sales, adding: "The whole point of this investigation into the mafia (and football) is, above all, to make everyone aware of the risks that both ignorance of and underestimation of the mafia phenomenon comport."

Paddy Agnew

Hearing...Andrea Agnelli (left) and Rosy Bindi

"Our new president is the Kylian Mbappe of politics. He's got to the top at a young age, become a star in less than a year and can play on either wing, right or left"

Eric Cantona (right) likens French head of state Emmanuel Macron to the Monaco star

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

Appointments, sackings and loans

Nantes boss... Claudio Ranieri

EUROPE

CLAUDIO RANIERI, who was sacked in February after winning the Premier League with Leicester City, was named coach of Nantes. **OSCAR GARCIA**, who led Red Bull Salzburg to back-to-back Austrian titles, joined Saint-Etienne.

Having led Alaves to last season's Spanish Cup Final, **MAURICIO PELLEGRINO** replaced Claude Puel at Southampton. Former Ajax and Internazionale boss **FRANK DE BOER** took over at Crystal Palace.

A player in the last Roma team to win Serie A, **EUSEBIO DI FRANCESCO** became the club's coach after leaving Sassuolo, who appointed **CRISTIAN BUCCHI**.

Ajax appointed youth-team boss **MARCEL KEIZER** as coach.

MANOLO MARQUEZ was named coach of Las Palmas.

Challenge... Serhiy Rebrov

JORDI CRUYFF took over as Maccabi Tel Aviv head coach after moving from his role as the Israeli club's sports director.

Former Spain international **THOMAS CHRISTIANSEN**, who led APOEL to the Cypriot title last season, was appointed manager of Leeds United.

PAUL LE GUEN was named coach of Turkish team Bursaspor.

SOUTH AMERICA

Sevilla's assistant coach **JUAN MANUEL LILLO** replaced Reinaldo Rueda in charge of Colombian champions Atletico Nacional.

CONCACAF

San Jose Earthquakes sacked coach Dominic Kinnear and replaced him with **CHRIS LEITCH**.

AFRICA

South Africa's all-time top scorer with 32 goals, **BENNI MCCARTHY** was named coach of Cape Town City, replacing **ERIC TINKLER** who joined SuperSport United.

ASIA

Ex-Ukraine international **SERHIY REBROV** stepped down at Dinamo Kiev and replaced Christian Gross at AFC Champions League quarter-finalists Al Ahli of Saudi Arabia.

WANG BAOSHAN replaced Sven-Goran Eriksson as coach of Chinese second-tier side Shenzhen.

Former Wigan Athletic manager **WARREN JOYCE** took charge of A-League club Melbourne City.

Portuguese **ULISSES MORAIS** took charge of Malaysia's 2015 AFC Cup winners Johor Darul Ta'zim.

Former Iran international star **ALI KARIMI**, 38, was appointed coach of Naft Tehran.

Promotion... Marcel Keizer

End...Alvaro Arbeloa

Record...Corentin Tolisso

Bayern pay record fee

Bayern Munich signed Lyon midfielder **CORENTIN TOLISSO** for a Bundesliga record fee of €41.5m. For all the summer moves in Europe's top five leagues go to www.worldsoccer.com

EUROPE

Former Real Madrid and Spain full-back **ALVARO ARBELOA** announced his retirement after making just three Premier League appearances for West Ham United last season before being released in May. The 34-year-old won the World Cup, two European Championships, two Champions League crowns and La Liga.

ASIA

German coach **ULI STIELIKE** was sacked by South Korea after a 3-2 defeat by Qatar in the World Cup qualifiers.

Dismissed... Uli Stielike

Brian GLANVILLE

THE VOICE OF FOOTBALL

Southgate's England are still not good enough

How ironic that hot on the heels of England's plodding displays against France and Scotland, their under-20s should win a world title with such panache in South Korea.

One hopes that, in a couple of years, many of this fine young team will be ready to step into the full national side. Certainly a winger with the pace and incision of Ademola Lookman, a Charlton Athletic discovery now at Everton, could probably help in the full England team now, even at the age of 19.

In Scotland, against a prosaic and mediocre home team, England were saved by the bell, you might say, when Harry Kane got that face-saving equaliser. But it was, as indeed it was in Paris, overall a wretched performance, even if those two cleverly taken free-kick goals by Scotland's Leigh Griffiths should probably have been prevented by a more alert and mobile Joe Hart. His place presumably will now go to a resuscitated Jack Butland. A season with Torino – where Denis Law, Joe Baker and Gerry Hitchens once played – has done nothing to enhance his reputation, though England still owe him gratitude for saving their faces in Slovenia.

There is so much to be done to the current England side if it is to avoid the familiar anticlimax and early demise in Russia next year. None of the centre-backs looked adequate. Gary Cahill looked vulnerable throughout against a France team reduced to 10 men on the dubious advice of the spy in the stand. John Stones is a gifted but erratic figure who gives far too many second chances. Chris Smalling is essentially a usually solid club player. Burnley's Michael Keane should surely have got on the field, ideally in both games. Middlesbrough's Ben Gibson is well worth a chance.

Gareth Southgate has hardly proved himself an inspiring or effective manager.

One hoped that given a general lack of pace in this England team – with the exception of Raheem Sterling – Jamie Vardy, who missed both games, would surely be essential. Since Kane is one of the few England players to distinguish himself in those games, there should surely be a partnership between him and Vardy, it being essential that a manager should cut his coat according to his cloth.

Under threat...Joe Hart is beaten for Scotland's second goal at Hampden

Saviour...Southgate and Harry Kane

Greaves, the noble goalscorer

Recently football writers have been picking their ideal England teams across the years and they have somewhat surprised me. One of those had the essentially left-footed marauding left-half Duncan Edwards deployed at right-back!

Nor would I have made Alan Shearer one of my choices. In the season when England, on home ground, had a sustained and somewhat shaky run in the European finals, he had until then had a barren season with England. When he did at last get off the mark at Wembley against Switzerland in the finals it was with a goal that was patently offside.

Nor, much though I liked and admired him, would I have put Jimmy Greaves, for all his goals, in my team. The truth is that he had a dismal 1962 World Cup in Chile when I remember him saying to me that there was so much violent play that people "were afraid of getting killed".

In 1966, I thought he was desperately unlucky. His basic modesty and decency was wonderfully shown on the Friday before the World Cup Final, when the England players trained on the ground of the Bank of England at Roehampton. On Sundays, he would play for fun in goal for a team called Tennis All Stars, out at Abridge in Essex. Goodness knows he must have been in a state of high tension at Roehampton, but, referring to a match my little Chelsea Casuals Sunday club had played at Abridge, he actually said: "We must have another game next season, Brian." Sheer nobility.

I thought then and still do that he should have been picked for the Final. Not instead of Geoff Hurst, who had come in with much elan when Greaves was injured playing against France, but in place of Roger Hunt who had never impressed me at international level and who would miss a couple of clear chances in the Final.

Class...Jimmy Greaves

Elleray's proposals are a mixed bag

David Elleray has never been among my favourite people. A one-time housemaster at Harrow school, the former referee later published an autobiography which was torn to pieces by the critics for its self-adulation. Not so long ago he was forced to apologise to a fellow official for what could be interpreted as a biased remark.

However, he seems to rise effortlessly above all such problems and is now in charge of the International Football Association Board, which suggests new rules.

I would certainly endorse Elleray's suggestion that a goal should be awarded in such shameful circumstances as we saw in the 2010 World Cup quarter-finals, when Ghana were cheated of success as Uruguay's Luis Suarez handled on the line in the final minute of extra time. Ghana, alas, missed the resulting penalty and Uruguay went through while Suarez celebrated on the touchline.

I am less enchanted by Elleray's proposal to limit each half of a game to a mere half hour when the ball is in play. In essence not a bad idea, but who would keep time off the field and, other than the senior clubs, who could afford to adopt such a practice with its own timekeeper?

Elleray would also like the taker of a free-kick to be allowed to play the ball himself rather than kick it into play. Controversial but not impossible.

Cheat...Uruguay's Luis Suarez (second right) denied Ghana

Barton deserves better

Once again, Joey Barton claims and deserves moral support for the manifest paradox which surrounds the Football Association's attitude to gambling. Barton, as we know, has been banned by the FA for making a multitude of bets over the years though almost every one of them involved other teams than his own. This has recently led to a long suspension.

Yet as one has emphasised before, hypocrisy is paramount since the FA had an agreement with the gambling firm Ladbrokes. The FA chairman Greg Clarke was dismally compromised by ordering a report. "Until I see that paper I don't have a position," he said.

Barton with his sporadic episodes of violence has never been my favourite player. But in this case he is surely a victim of hypocrisy.

Victim...Joey Barton has been banned

Wenger powers on

Arsenal, as one anticipated, have given Arsene Wenger a deeply controversial new two-year chance. A pliable and even somewhat obsequious board was never very likely to do otherwise, for all the unrest among the fans and, the FA Cup Final aside, such dismal results. Chiefly the failure to reach even a fourth place in the Premier League and therefore no European Champions Cup for the first time for so many years.

> It seems that Sanchez is irreplaceable, whomever Arsenal may sign

That in itself will surely now cost them Alexis Sanchez, who has been the one refulgent star of their poor season. It seems that Sanchez is irreplaceable, whomever Arsenal sign; goodness knows they seem to be casting their nets wide.

Meanwhile, Wenger has won his joust with the Arsenal directorate.

There will, above all, be no director of football to get in his way as he clearly sees it, and the arrival of accomplished but essentially secondary figures to assist on the side of physical preparation will hardly impinge on Wenger's hegemony.

● Read Brian Glanville's weekly online column at worldsoccer.com

PRO:DIRECT

THE ART OF CONTROL

INTRODUCING THE MIZUNO REBULA. PURE LEATHER. PURE CLASS.

Your touch is perfect. Your movements are one step ahead of everyone else. No one can get near you when you've got the ball. This is the art of control.

Mizuno's Rebula truly takes leather boots to the next level, incorporating several new technologies to provide the ultimate blend of comfort and performance. The idea is to combine the quality materials Mizuno are renowned for – they use some of the best leather in the world to make their "Made in Japan" boots – with modern structural elements like the CT-Frame, a stitchless K-leather skeleton that's fully integrated within the upper. The result is one of the best control boots we've ever seen. Midfield creators will love these – Keisuke Honda certainly does.

MIZUNO REBULA VI MADE IN JAPAN FG

QR: 156067 - £260

FULL K-LEATHER & WATER RESISTANT

For superb dominance of the ball under any condition.

CT-FRAME

Incorporated CT-Frame for increased stability, enhanced ball sense of touch and improved fit.

STUD STABILISERS

Provides 30% less deformation under high loads.

DUAL DENSITY OUTSOLE

A combination of stability and flexibility provided by the incorporation of nylon in the rearfoot and TPU in the forefoot.

PRODUCT DOCTOR

The big innovation here is undoubtedly the CT-Frame. The improvement in feel is noticeable, making the Rebula a great choice for players who see a lot of the ball, controlling the game with intelligent touches and pinpoint passing.

PRO:DIRECT

THE ART OF CONTROL

INTRODUCING THE MIZUNO REBULA. PURE LEATHER. PURE CLASS.

Your touch is perfect. Your movements are one step ahead of everyone else. No one can get near you when you've got the ball. This is the art of control.

Mizuno's Rebula truly takes leather boots to the next level, incorporating several new technologies to provide the ultimate blend of comfort and performance. The idea is to combine the quality materials Mizuno are renowned for – they use some of the best leather in the world to make their "Made in Japan" boots – with modern structural elements like the CT-Frame, a stitchless K-leather skeleton that's fully integrated within the upper. The result is one of the best control boots we've ever seen. Midfield creators will love these – Keisuke Honda certainly does.

MIZUNO REBULA VI MADE IN JAPAN FG

QR: 156067 - £260

FULL K-LEATHER & WATER RESISTANT

For superb dominance of the ball under any condition.

CT-FRAME

Incorporated CT-Frame for increased stability, enhanced ball sense of touch and improved fit.

STUD STABILISERS

Provides 30% less deformation under high loads.

DUAL DENSITY OUTSOLE

A combination of stability and flexibility provided by the incorporation of nylon in the rearfoot and TPU in the forefoot.

PRODUCT DOCTOR

The big innovation here is undoubtedly the CT-Frame. The improvement in feel is noticeable, making the Rebula a great choice for players who see a lot of the ball, controlling the game with intelligent touches and pinpoint passing.

READY &

eyewitness

Kier Radnedge reports from Saint Petersburg

WAITING

The **Confederations Cup** provided a dry run for next year's World Cup – with some surprises along the way

Football, in the run-up, had been almost an afterthought at the Confederations Cup. In fact, it turned out to be a decent competition for what is almost certainly its last stand as no one envisages a doubly disruptive further staging in December 2021 in Qatar.

Germany coach Joachim Low, a mite arrogantly, had suggested he and his team (on-field and off-pitch) had little to learn. Australia and New Zealand were expected to be competitive but modest, while Portugal depended on Cristiano Ronaldo's mood. Meanwhile, the right of African champions Cameroon to send a team was under question after a governance row... which left Chile ▸

and Mexico as obvious joint favourites.

Hosts Russia were no one's favourites; not even their own supporters after dismal group-stage exits at the 2014 World Cup and Euro 2016.

In the event the tournament generated some pleasant surprises, partly through the Russian fans who turned out in force for their own team and, occasionally, threw their enthusiastic backing behind Chile, Mexico and Cameroon. Not that it did them much good in the end.

With FIFA president Gianni Infantino talking of wanting to pull the agenda back to football, secretary-general Fatma Samoura, organising president Vitaly Mutko and CEO Alexey Sorokin took up the theme ahead of a tournament which included the full deployment of anti-discrimination monitors.

Mutko, also president of the Russian Football Union, had more reason than the rest to take a particular interest in the host team with their new coach in former goalkeeper Stanislav Cherchesov and only nine players from the squad who flopped at the Euro finals.

On cue, in Group A, they delivered a 2-0 victory over New Zealand in the Opening Match in the new Krestovsky Island stadium in Saint Petersburg. Russian president Vladimir Putin and a VIP guest list which included Pele saw the hosts claim what proved their sole success courtesy of a first-half own goal from Michael Boxall and a close-range second-half strike from Fedor Smolov.

> "At the 2003 Confederations Cup, we had players with Real Madrid, Inter and Liverpool. Not any more"
>
> **Cameroon coach Hugo Broos**

Smolov and raiding right-back Alexander Samedov were the best of the Russians. The Krasnodar striker summed up the squad's ambition as "wanting to make our supporters and people throughout the country fall in love with the national team".

New Zealand boss Anthony Hudson thought his team would "learn a lot from this unbelievable experience". But while they remained combative throughout the group stage, the class gap was evident by comparison with the second game, in which Portugal were held 2-2 by Mexico.

Cristiano Ronaldo collected the man of the match award but the European champions let his inspiration go to waste. Twice they led their opposite numbers from central/north America, through Ricardo Quaresma and Cedric Soares, but each time they wasted the advantage and conceded equalisers to Javier Hernandez and Hector Moreno.

Mexico subsequently had their knuckles rapped by FIFA for their fans' use of the notorious *puto* abuse which had been the subject of strong previous disciplinary charges. This time the warning appeared to work, although fans back home may take no notice.

Ronaldo collected another man of the match award as Portugal beat Russia 1-0 to take over the group leadership. Portugal were a class better than their hosts for much of the match but their failure to convert commanding first-half possession into more goals left them vulnerable to a late supporter-inspired Russian surge.

Unfortunately Cherchesov's men lacked the necessary precision in and around the penalty box, and they fell to an eighth-minute Ronaldo header which punished sloppy defending. It was a day to forget for Igor Akinfeev on his 100th appearance in goal.

New Zealand duly lost their second game 2-1 to Mexico and they finished bottom of Group A after crashing 4-0 to table-toppers Portugal. Ronaldo scored his 75th international goal with a 33rd-minute penalty and collected a third man of the match award. That was hardly surprising though, as FIFA threw open voting via the internet and he has a higher social media following than any other player on the planet.

Russia duly faded after losing 2-1 to Mexico in Kazan. Victory would have lifted the hosts into the semi-finals and they raised fans' hopes after snatching a 25th-minute lead through Samedov. Mexico responded through Nestor Araujo and Hirving Lozano, and they were already heading safely for the semi-finals when Russia were reduced to 10 men by the expulsion of Yuri Zhirkov.

Interest...Vitaly Mutko (left) and Stanislav Cherchesov

Cherchesov, having succeeded Leonid Slutsky after the failure in France two years ago, insisted that speculation about his future was the stuff of dreams. He was proud of his team "for doing as much as they could in the circumstances". The task ahead was all about "continuing to work as we have been and connecting the sporting dots".

Akinfeev is a better keeper than he looked in the Confederations Cup, but Russia need a central defender who can attack crosses, not duck out of the way like Viktor Vasin and Fyodor Kudryashov. Meanwhile, midfield duo Denis Glushakov and Aleksandr Golovin played below potential, as if scared to go forward.

Cherchesov could point to some injury absences as an excuse but the prospects of having a competitive team by next year appear remote. Fans and media are putting their faith in what they believe to be a World Cup tradition of a friendly

Man of the match... Cristiano Ronaldo (left) takes on Viktor Vasin of Russia

first-round draw for the hosts.

In Group B, Germany and Chile justified their favourites labels even though the world champions brought something of a scratch squad. Most of the seniors were allowed a summer holiday for a change while the under-21s were contesting their own European Championship in Poland.

Julian Draxler was the side's playmaker and captain, with senior-level support from Emre Can and Jonas Hector. Draxler, Lars Stindl and Leon Goretzka struck for a 3-2 opening win over Australia despite handling errors from goalkeeper Bernd Leno which gifted goals to Tom Rogic and Tomi Juric.

Chile opened with a 2-0 win over Cameroon thanks to late goals from Arturo Vidal and Eduardo Vargas after second-half substitute Alexis Sanchez made all the difference. He provided the left-wing cross from which Vidal headed Chile in front in the 81st minute, then he raced clear in stoppage time before Vargas scored number two.

Germany and Chile subsequently surged within sight of the semi-finals with a 1-1 draw in Kazan. The Germans gifted the South American champions an eighth-minute breakthrough when Sanchez punished a lazy clearance from

VIPs...(from left) Pele, Gianni Infantino and Vladimir Putin

Shkhodran Mustafi to become Chile's 38-goal, all-time top scorer.

The world champions were fortunate not to fall further behind when a drive from Eduardo Vargas thumped against the bar, but they capitalised on the escape to equalise before half-time when Stindl topped off a fine team move featuring Can and Hector.

In group terms, Cameroon and Australia proved to be their own worst enemies by sharing a 1-1 draw, while Germany stepped up to top the group by accelerating in the second half in Sochi to beat the African champions 3-1. Cameroon ended up with 10 men after the expulsion of right-back Ernest Mabouka, albeit only after the video assistant corrected Colombian referee Wilmar Roldan who had initially dismissed Sebastien Siani.

One goal from Hoffenheim midfielder Kerem Demirbay and two from Timo Werner provided Low with his 100th win in his 150th game since stepping up to succeed Jurgen Klinsmann after the 2006 World Cup finals.

Not so happy was Cameroon's Belgian boss Hugo Broos. Besiktas centre-forward Vincent Aboubakar was the best of a talented but disjointed team who may not be returning to Russia next year.

Broos, presumably with nothing to lose from honesty, thought the outcome no surprise. He considered Cameroon to be living off past success and added: "At the 2003 Confederations Cup, we had players with Real Madrid, Inter Milan and Liverpool. Not any more. There is a lack of pitches and infrastructure in the country so it is impossible to train good footballers for modern football."

Chile took second place after a nervy 1-1 draw against Australia, for whom Tim Cahill was making a 100th appearance. The Socceroos led in the 42nd minute through James Troisi, their Asian Cup match-winner, only for *La Roja* to claim their semi-final slot through Pablo Rodriguez's equaliser.

Socceroos' coach Ange Postecoglou defended his attacking formation and thought his players would gain "massive belief" from the experience as they continue in pursuit of a place at a fourth successive World Cup. They go to Asian Group B leaders Japan in August for a potentially decisive match.

Chile regrouped for the semi-final against Portugal. Both teams had early chances in both halves before the game went, goalless, into extra time.

Goalkeeper-captain Claudio Bravo made excellent saves from Andre Silva and Ronaldo then capped his triumphant evening with brilliant stops to deny Ricardo Quaresma, Joao Moutinho and Nani. Chile's Vidal, Charles Aranguiz and Sanchez thrashed home their spot-kicks.

This was a remarkable turnaround in fortunes for the 34-year-old Chilean captain who had endured a highly criticised and confidence-shredding first season in the English Premier League at Manchester City after arriving from Barcelona last August.

Chile just about deserved to emerge as winners of a tight game, if only because they were desperately unlucky in hitting both post and bar minutes before the end of the extra 30 minutes.

A repeat of their 1-1 group draw with

Equaliser...Mexico's Hector Moreno (no15) heads home against Portugal

Germany was then set up for the Final when Low's men, who had been improving from game to game destroyed Mexico 4-1 in Sochi.

They had their place in the Final secured after only eight minutes following a double strike by Leon Goretzka. Werner scored a third early in the second half before the match reached a lively climax with an exchange of further goals from Marco Fabian – who plays his club football in Germany for Eintracht Frankfurt – and Armin Younes.

Germany, even below full strength and whatever the result of the Final, had demonstrated impressive, cautionary strength in depth. WS

VAR, THE STAR OF THE SHOW

The alternative star of the show in Russia was the video assistant referee (VAR). The faceless man somewhere in and around the stadium. The match official nobody saw but whose shady presence cast a spell of dubious expectation over every game.

This was bad news for the match referees as it was almost as if everyone in Sochi or Saint Petersburg, Kazan or Moscow Spartak was awaiting the first blunder. Doubtless, in corners of the internet around the world, bets were being wagered on the number of minutes before the video ref joined the action. Just one more operating option for the betting markets.

VAR involves two video assistant referees following the action on screens and telling the match referee about his mistakes. The 12 group matches at the Confederations Cup saw the VAR help correct six game-changing decisions and assist in ruling appropriately on another 29 "major incidents".

In the first game in Kazan, a first-half "goal" by Nani for Portugal was disallowed by American VAR Jair Marrufo because of a clear offside. But a VAR intervention a few hours later, in Chile's 2-0 win over Cameroon in Moscow, proved far more contentious.

On half-time, Arturo Vidal pierced the Cameroon defence for Eduardo Vargas to stride through and score. But celebrations were cut short when Slovene referee Damir Skomina referred the incident to the VAR and Frenchman Clement Turpin adjudged Vargas offside.

The decision infuriated Chilean fans in the stadium and Vidal had to be pulled away from Skomina as the teams and officials left the pitch at half-time. Later Vidal said: "The system was explained to us before the tournament. But when something happens in the emotion of the game it's difficult to take in."

Turpin did even the score later. In second-half stoppage time he denied an offside award against Sanchez on the counter-attack and Vargas, this time, was allowed to claim what was Chile's second goal.

Moscow's incidents, however, provided a cautionary sight of a comprehension gap between the technocrats in the laboratory and the individuals on the pitch. As Cameroon coach Hugo Broos said: "The VAR can be very important but if it's going to happen several times during a match it's not very pleasant for the players."

> "The system was explained to us before the tournament. But when something happens in the emotion of the game it's difficult to take in"
>
> **Chile's Arturo Vidal on VAR referrals**

Chile coach Juan Antonio Pizzi agreed, commenting: "It needs more time to get the system right. We are still in the testing phase and feelings can be difficult [to control] because we have been used to something different. So we have to wait and see. Maybe after some time it will get better.

"Technology can bring more justice in football but right now it's still a little difficult for the players. Even if it's the right decision it still has an impact on their emotions. FIFA has to evaluate this experiment but I also hope they will listen to us before making a decision."

Team work...VARs monitor screens during New Zealand's game with Portugal

Germany and Australia joined the fun in Sochi when the Socceroos' second goal from Tomi Juric, in a 3-2 defeat, was approved by the VAR after queries over a possible handball.

With the video system commanding headlines and press conference questions, FIFA president Gianni Infantino stepped in to indicate that the world federation was keeping the faith.

Infantino has always insisted he expects the International Football Association Board to ratify the use of the VAR system at its annual meeting next spring and thus provide a green light for its use at the World Cup back in Russia next year.

He said: "I am extremely happy with VAR so far. We have seen how video assistance has helped referees to make the correct decisions. This is what VAR is all about.

"What fans have been waiting for over so many years is finally happening. This is a milestone tournament. Video assistant refereeing is the future of modern football."

There was no let up. In Australia's draw with Cameroon, Alex Gersbach was felled in the penalty area by Ernest Mabouka

Info...spectators are informed of a Video Incident Review during the game at the Spartak Stadium in Moscow

and American video assistant Jair Marrufo confirmed the spot-kick, converted by Michael Milligan. Then Mexico had what would have been a third goal against Russia, by Hector Moreno, disallowed for offside by the video assistant but went on to win 2-1 anyway.

Further confusion arose in the semi-finals when Chile had a justifiable penalty claim shrugged off by Iranian referee Alireza Faghani after Vargas was felled by Jose Fonte. Rashvan Irmatov, the screen man, allowed the game to run on. Whether he was acting on orders to rein in the interference or whether Faghani decided to strike back on behalf of the man on the pitch remained a mystery.

Oddly there was another unremarked penalty incident in the other semi-final when Germany's Timo Werner was pushed in the back as he ran through on goal. Ref Nestor Pitana waved play on as if nothing had happened. Mexico might even have protested about offside when Werner scored Germany's third, minutes later. Again, no one raised a query.

The semi-final "non-incidents" raised a suspicion that the VARs had been reined back after dominating the group games and reaching a confused climax in particular in Germany's 3-1 defeat of Cameroon. The African champions ended up with 10 men after the expulsion of right-back Ernest Mabouka for a foul on Emre Can. Yet Mabouka was only dismissed after nearly four minutes of confusion after the VAR corrected Colombian referee Wilmar Roldan for initially having sent off Sebastien Siani, despite checking his decision.

Even the eventual correction demonstrated that the VAR does not necessarily end controversy because Cameroon coach Broos, German boss Joachim Low and Can himself also questioned whether it was even a red card offence.

FIFA's head of refereeing, Massimo Busacca, conceded subsequently that the credibility of the VAR system was being harmed by the time taken over reaching decisions. The Swiss former international referee was aggressively positive about how the system had reduced the number of officials' errors.

All the interventions had brought about a correct decision but he appealed for as many FAs as possible to join the testing programme. This would assist not only FIFA but every country's own match officials and players.

Busacca did not mention the role of the International Board. The game's law-makers have been bypassed by the pace of the race to video justice. They have been presented with a fait accompli and one wonders, long term, if even a quasi-indepenent IFAB has a future.

For Busacca, quick and clear communication between the match referee and the video assistant is the key to reducing waiting time between the incident and the decision. Finding a way to keep fans informed in a timely fashion is also important.

Red...Ernest Mabouka of Cameroon is sent off against Germany on advice of the VAR

He said: "It's important to say that clear mistakes were not missed. But communication is crucial. It must be short and clear. Not too long, as everyone saw [with Cameroon]. We have to admit that was not good."

Busacca also considered it essential to tighten up on the time between an incident and the review. This meant match officials could not await the next break in play, partly also because other, complicating incidents might occur in the meantime.

He said: "If a referee doesn't whistle then, in principle, the game should be stopped immediately [on the order of the VAR] when there is a clear mistake. We will never be perfect but we will achieve a reduction in mistakes. Technology is a big tool for prevention of errors."

This is not in doubt. The key issues now are speed of intervention and the balance of power between referee and VAR...and, of course, whether IFAB should be despatched to the dustbin of football history. WS

Disallowed...Hector Moreno's goal for Mexico against Russia is ruled out by the VAR

STRONG-ARM TACTICS GIVE RUSSIA THE EDGE

Jerome Valcke, during his nine years as FIFA secretary-general before a high-speed descent to the sack and criminal suspicion, earned infamy for two remarks.

One was the suggestion, ahead of the 2014 World Cup, that the Brazilian hosts needed "a kick up the backside" in expediating preparations work. The other was he was looking forward to Russia 2018 because "less democracy is sometimes better for organising a World Cup." Dictatorships could get things done.

The Frenchman, in his narrow World Cup field of vision at least, has been vindicated. South Africa, in 2010, worked only because FIFA threw money and expertise at the operation. The South Africans' incompetence was revealed in details such as the park-and-ride scheme for fans going to Soccer City. No one thought to pay the bus drivers so they walked away, leaving fans stranded.

Similarly, Brazil worked in 2014 thanks only to the dedication of local officials determined to see the job through.

Such a scenario was not expected in Russia. Whatever the volley of barbs aimed at president Vladimir Putin and his vast state, no one ever questioned the Russians' organisational competence. And so it proved, at least as far as the Confederations Cup has been concerned.

For the World Cup the hosts have decided to use what they term "European Russia", which means a tournament stretching a staggering 1,200 miles – from Saint Petersburg in the north to Sochi in the south, and 1,500 miles from Kaliningrad in the west to Yekaterinburg in the east. This is the equivalent of Helsinki to Rome and of Paris to Moscow.

It takes a disciplined bureaucracy to bring organisational unity to an event such as a World Cup. A good example was Japan/South Korea when it was possible to fly from one to the other and hardly see the join. As for Russia, the Winter Olympics which cost a reputed $51 billion in Sochi, was child's play by comparison with the World Cup.

The Russian plan comprises four clusters for the eight groups: North (Kaliningrad, Saint Petersburg), Central (Moscow Luzhniki and Spartak), Volga (Nizhny Novgorod, Kazan, Samara, Saransk, Volgograd) and South/Ural (Rostov-on-Don, Sochi, Yekaterinburg).

An organisational update was provided at the four-venue Confederations Cup on the eve of the semi-finals by FIFA head of competitions Colin Smith and local committee CEO Alexey Sorokin.

Smith said the overall operation had been carried out "at a very high level" throughout the four host cities. Some 450,000 fans had attended the 12 group matches, with an average of 37,000 per match, which was slightly higher than in 2009 in South Africa.

He praised the 6,000 volunteers as "fantastic" and the provision of 262 free trains between cities for fans. The games had been broadcast in 183 territories and the 8million in Russia who watched the hosts play Portugal was the top audience for a sports event in the country this year.

Deputy prime minister, and head of both the World Cup local organising committee as well as of the Russian Football Union, Vitaly Mutko reported "some minor operational issues" that need to be resolved by next year. He also acknowledged the co-operation of foreign police services in helping ensure that security had worked well. This included preventing a group of Britons bringing flares into the Kazan Arena for the Germany v Chile game. The Russian Embassy in London reported them as being members of a "media team" trying to evade security controls.

Not that everything worked as effectively and efficiently.

Sorokin reported an administrative breakdown concerning spectators who delayed collecting the essential Fan-IDs without which they could not enter the stadia. Many more city-centre distribution centres will be needed.

A major issue had arisen over stadium construction, notably at the Saint Petersburg project. Delays caused by financial issues and construction-company blunders meant a race against time to be ready. Hence the resort to gangs of North Korean workers who were later reported to have been treated in something like slave-labour conditions.

They were sent home after Human Rights Watch raised the issue and FIFA complained to the Russians but by then the bulk of the work was done. From the outside the stadium looks magnificent, but the pitch is an ongoing problem.

Travel is a major challenge at any World Cup and, although there are plenty of airports, Moscow is the air-travel hub and flights between even some cluster neighbours are routed up through the capital and back down south again.

The provision of 262 free trains between the Confederations Cup cities was a fine idea. The trouble was their availability was not confirmed until late in the day, when fans had booked other options. The Russians blamed this on FIFA's inability to provide fan numbers.

An expanded rail operation to encompass the World Cup is out of the question. A train from Saint Petersburg to Sochi, for example, would take more than two days. However, free train travel between cluster cities could be possible – with the proviso that fans will need to know about availability and booking options by the draw on December 1. WS

Whatever the volley of barbs aimed at president Vladimir Putin and his vast state, no one ever questioned the Russians' organisational competence

Fan-tastic...one of the volunteers at the Confederations Cup

Essential...a fan's ID

Security...fans are checked before the opening game

DOPING AND BRIBING DOMINATE THE AGENDA

Two issues – setting aside geopolitical crises – have haunted Russia's prospective hosting of the World Cup. One concerned the manner in which the country won rights to stage the party in the first place, the other focuses on doping.

Russia won the favour of FIFA's executive committee ahead of Portugal/Spain, Belgium/Holland and England. A great deal of angry hot air emanated from England, but few observers could challenge Russia's football tradition, its organisational capability or the fact it had thrown more resources at the bidding effort than all its rivals.

The simultaneous shock of Qatar winning 2022 cast a pall of suspicion over the process. FIFA subsequently created the independent ethics chamber and appointed American attorney Michael Garcia as prosecutor-cum-investigator. His investigation led to a published summary from ethics judges Hans-Joachim Eckert and Cornel Borbely which found nothing seriously actionable.

Garcia quit, unhappy with the summary, but the report remained under lock and key until midway through the Confederations Cup, when Germany's *Bild* obtained a leaked copy. As it began to publish extracts, so FIFA's new ethics chiefs, Maria Claudia Rojas and Vassilios Skouris, put the entire report into the public domain (see page 11).

A report on the Russian bid by now-removed Cornel Borbely gave it a clean bill of health, with the caveat that much of the correspondence had been destroyed along with the computers leased from a company controlled by Chelsea owner Roman Abramovich.

Vitaly Mutko and Aexei Sorokin, World Cup organising president and his CEO, were smugly satisfied to have the award issue put to rest. However the dark doping cloud will not go away.

Satisfied... Alexey Sorokin (left) and Vitaly Mutko

An institutionalised doping and cover-up system across all of Russian sport was revealed by two reports to the World Anti-Doping Agency in the run-up to last year's Rio de Janeiro Olympic Games.

Football escaped lightly compared with individual/endurance sports such as athletics and weightlifting. However, samples from 30 players were known to be under scrutiny from WADA – a figure which was revealed to have risen to 155 during the Confederations Cup.

FIFA appears to have as little idea as anyone else about when definite rulings will be available and which players were concerned. Canadian law professor Richard McLaren has no doubts that a "cleansing" system had been in place and, logically, this would have been worthwhile only for senior internationals.

Thus, with Garcia firing a blank, doping continues to provide Russia's critics with plenty of ammunition. WS

Winners look ahead to 2018

Germany carried off the Confederations Cup and are now favourites to become only the third nation in World Cup history to win the global prize twice in succession.

Italy achieved the double in 1934 and 1938, while Brazil managed it in 1958 and 1962. That Joachim Low has all the tools and the talent at his disposal to do likewise is beyond doubt.

On the weekend that Germany triumphed in Russia, the country also won the Euro Under-21s in Poland.

Low said: "We know Germany are always favourites no matter what the tournament. But just because you win the Confederations Cup and the European Under-21s it's no guarantee of being world champions again.

"In the World Cup there are many more competitive teams and you have to do so much in just four weeks so we will need to deal with that. We don't have a problem being favourites but for any tournament you have to perform at 100 per cent all the time so we'll try our best to do that next year."

Chile dominated the first 19 minutes at the Krestovsky Island stadium but then Marcelo Diaz was caught in possession by Timo Werner and Lars Stindl opened the scoring with ease with his third goal in four appearances at the tournament.

Germany might have scored more through Leon Goretzka and outstanding skipper Julian Draxler (twice) before the South American champions raised their game, with Arturo Vidal having one low shot saved by Marc-Andre Ter Stegen and blazing another effort over the bar. Chile sub Angelo Sagal also fired over when well placed.

"My idea was for us to put every last drop of energy into this tournament," said Chile coach Juan Antonio Pizzi. "I was convinced that if we went home with no energy left at least we would be full with glory. Unfortunately we go home with no energy and no trophy."

Mature... Germany

CONFEDERATIONS CUP FINAL

Jul 2, Saint Petersburg. ***Att:*** *57,268.* ***VAR:*** *Turpin (Fra)*

CHILE: 0 GERMANY: 1 *(Stindl 20)*

HT: 0-1. ***Ref:*** Mazic (Ser)

CHILE: Bravo – Isla, Medel, Jara, Beausejour – Hernandez, M Diaz (Valencia 53), Aranguiz (Sagal 80) – Vidal – Vargas (Puch 80), Sanchez. **Coach:** Pizzi.

GERMANY: Ter Stegen – Ginter, Mustafi, Rudiger - Kimmich, Rudy, Goretzka (Sule 90), Hector – Stindl, Draxler – Werner (Can 78). **Coach:** Low.

Golden glove (best goalkeeper): Claudio Bravo (Chile). **Golden Boot** (top scorer): Timo Werner (Germany) 3 goals (plus assists). **Golden ball** (best player): Julian Draxler (Germany).

eye witness

Steve Menary reports

NORTHERN CYPRUS

FIFA-less nations enjoy their moment in the sun

After a successful Euros this summer, next year's ConIFA World Cup is set for London

The distraught Abkhazia team sat in the tunnel, sobbing. Their dream was over. After hosting and winning the 2016 ConIFA World Cup, Abkhazia – a state that broke away from Georgia after a bloody war in the early 1990s – were confident of winning the ConIFA European Cup in Northern Cyprus, organised for non-FIFA affiliated associations.

But after a goalless semi-final against Padania, from northern Italy, Abkhazia lost 6-5 on penalties. One of the only teams to bring a significant number of visiting fans, their flags drooped in the shadow of the stadium's main stand. Even an American TV producer who was making a documentary was in tears; perhaps because the fairy-tale ending she envisaged had gone.

At least the Abkhazians got to play. Back home there is a 10-team league, but it is totally isolated. Dinamo Sukhum are a shadow of the side that once played in the old Russian Premier League, while last season's champions Nart, along with Gagra and Afon, have dominated the Abkhaz league for the past decade.

"We cannot play outside of Abkhazia. ConIFA lets us do that," says Dimitri Pagava, Abkhazian vice-president of the Confederation of Independent Football Associations (ConIFA).

Since the turn of the Millennium, the notion of football being played outside of FIFA has gained ground.

> "Most of our members are viewed as the forgotten people. They often have a tragic history and people have an opinion but don't know so much about them"
>
> **Per-Anders Blind of Sweden's Sami people**

The Island Games football tournament, which began in 1985, inspired the creation of the New Football Federations-Board, which staged five VIVA World Cups for unrecognised states, between 2006 and 2012. Other tournaments also emerged, from the Wild Cup in Hamburg and the ELF Cup in Northern Cyprus, in 2006, to the Europeada tournament for people speaking minority European languages staged every four years since 2008.

"Most of our members are viewed as the forgotten people," says Per-Anders Blind, a referee from Sweden's Sami – the tribal minority previously known as Laplanders. "They often have a tragic history and people have an opinion but don't know so much about them."

Blind, who had refereed at the VIVA World Cup, founded ConIFA with Sascha Duerkop in 2013, and they have seen

Beaten...Abkhazia (in blue) lost 3-1 to Szekely Land in the third-place play-off

Support...Abkhazia had a significant following

Founder...ConIFA's Per-Anders Blind

standards rise – both on and off the field – in the four tournaments they have organised so far.

In June's ConIFA Euro 2017 in Northern Cyprus, most games were close – apart from an 8-0 battering inflicted by the hosts on South Ossetia, some of whose players spent the previous evening in a nightclub in the upmarket Acapulco complex where the teams stayed.

"I was surprised, I thought that the standard would be down but it's not," says Csaba Csizmadia, captain of Szekely Land, a team of players from Romania's Hungarian-speaking minority.

Csizmadia is well placed to gauge the standard, having played hundreds of games in the Hungarian top flight and the Austrian Bundesliga and won more than a dozen caps for Hungary. And he was not the only professional player at the tournament. Abkhazia's squad included four players from the Russian league and Daur Kvekveskiri, a striker with Serbian top-flight club Napredak Krusevac, while Seamus Sharkey from League of Ireland side Sligo Rovers featured for the Isle of Man's representatives, Ellan Vannin.

The tournament was won by Padania, who beat the hosts 4-2 on penalties after a 1-1 draw in Nicosia's Ataturk Stadium. And although the event cost the Northern Cyprus football federation €600,000 they

Heartbreak... Abkhazia lost on penalties in the semi-finals

Glory...the Euro 2017 medals

Champions...Padania

consider it money well spent.

Football in the north of Cyprus has been isolated since the Turkish invasion of 1974 annexed the top half of the island. Initially, the Northern Cypriot football federation (KTFF) shunned ConIFA as they sought to agree a deal with the Cyprus Football Association. But when talks broke down, they sent a team to Abkhazia for the 2016 ConIFA World Cup.

Orcun Kamali, the KTFF's international relations manager, says: "FIFA and the International Olympic Committee need to do something for the children here.

"We can get Turkish or Cypriot passports, so if you want to become a really good player there are options, but the children cannot play outside."

ConIFA's plan is to stage tournaments every year, and so far they are managing to co-exist with officialdom.

In May 2017, a team representing British Punjabis played the English Football Association's C team, with the game publicised on the FA's website. And ConIFA hopes this will mean there is no objections to the 2018 ConIFA World Cup being held in London.

It is hoped a team of Tibetans from the community of exiles established in India since their country's annexation by China in 1959 will take part. Tibet played at the 2006 Wild Cup despite formal Chinese protests but Blind insists: "This is a peace project, not a political project."

Final...Padania won a penalty shoot-out

Political objections are, however, inevitable. At the first Football World Cup, Azerbaijan complained about the participation of Nagorno-Karabakh, which split away after a bloody conflict with Armenia that still rumbles on, while at the 2015 Euros in Hungary, Georgia managed to prevent Abkhazia from travelling.

Attempts to keep the politics out have been made, and Padania's links with the separatist Liga Nord in Italy are allegedly severed. Certainly, none of the Liga Nord lobbying that had marred previous non-FIFA tournaments was in evidence at

CONIFA TOURNAMENTS

YEAR	EVENT	HOST	WINNERS	RUNNERS-UP
2014	World Cup	Sapmi	County of Nice	Ellan Vannin
2015	European Cup	Hungary	Padania	County of Nice
2016	World Cup	Abkhazia	Abkhazia	Panjab
2017	European Cup	Northern Cyprus	Padania	Northern Cyprus

the tournament in Northern Cyprus.

Blind says next year's World Cup Final will be held at Loftus Road, home of Championship side Queens Park Rangers, but group matches are more likely to be at amateur or even university grounds.

The harsh reality of funding remains a challenge for ConIFA and the cost of staging a 16-team World Cup in London is put at €1.5million.

Accommodating 16 parties of 30-plus players and officials will be the biggest financial burden, and teams will not get the sort of luxury accommodation enjoyed in Northern Cyprus.

In Abkhazia and Northern Cyprus, the host governments stepped in, but with no quasi-political support in London, sponsorship is needed. Costs at ConIFA events are covered by the host nation, but teams must fund their own travel. Ellan Vannin had to raise £12,000 to get to Northern Cyprus and travel costs will be significantly higher if Kiribati and Tuvalu go to London as Duerkop hopes.

Those two isolated Pacific island chains have been largely ignored by FIFA for years, but ConIFA made the trip to Kiribati in November.

The visit was made on the organisation's behalf by an enthusiastic volunteer, under their own steam, to help Kiribati federation president Ioteba Redfern with a renewed attempt to join FIFA.

And it is just that sort of enthusiastic volunteering that remains the motivating ethos behind ConIFA – and is, perhaps, why the organisation is succeeding. WS

Coach...Abkhazia's Beslan Ajinjal

Who's next for FIFA membership?

Zanzibar, an African island of 1.3million people that is part of Tanzania, has high hopes of becoming FIFA's 212th member. States within states are not generally allowed into FIFA unless they have support of the parent association, but Zanzibar has the support of Tanzania. It became a full member of the Confederation of African Football this year and admittance to FIFA would give Africa 55 FIFA members – as many as UEFA.

Kurdistan could join FIFA ahead of Zanzibar if a vote for independence from Iraq on September 25 proves decisive.

In Europe, **Northern Cyprus** has sought recognition for years but to no avail due to pressure from the Cyprus Football Association, which was accepted into FIFA in 1948. According to *The Independent*, UEFA began tentative negotiations with **Nagorno-Karabakh** in November 2016 but this will be blocked by Azerbaijan, who lost the territory more than two decades ago in an Armenian-backed conflict. UEFA has ignored Jersey's appeals for membership and the Channel Island has taken its attempts to at least be heard to the Court of Arbitration for Sport.

Hopeful...Zanzibar plan to join FIFA

Greenland could potentially join UEFA or CONCACAF. And a new member in the north of the region would suit CONCACAF's North American leadership, who are locked in a power struggle with the Caribbean states who make up the bulk of its members.

Such is the bitterness in CONCACAF that **French Guiana** is considering switching to CONMEBOL. Along with Martinique, French Guiana qualified for this summer's CONCACAF Gold Cup. But while fellow French territories Guadeloupe and Saint-Martin are full CONCACAF members none are in FIFA.

Currently helping **Kiribati** and **Tuvalu** to join FIFA, ConIFA says Kiribati was advised by FIFA to join the East Asian Football Federation, a subsidiary of the AFC. But that would be impossible as Kiribati and Tuvalu are associate members of Oceania.

Joining FIFA would transform the game in any of these places as president Gianni Infantino has pledged to raise FIFA membership payments from $1million every four years to $5m.

That promise won Infantino plenty of votes from those poor and tiny countries who make up more than half of FIFA's membership. But with sponsors for FIFA's main money-spinner, the World Cup, slow to come through, the world body may be reticent to bankroll new members.

TOMORROW'S STARS TODAY

Talentscout

WORLD UNDER-20S

WORDS: Nick Bidwell

Adalberto PENARANDA

Age 20 (31.05.97), winger, Watford (Eng) & Venezuela

In a sentence
The poster boy of his country's best-ever generation of footballers, he is a typical South American blend of determination and fantasy.

What they say
Venezuela senior and under-20 coach Rafael Dudamel: "Every day he plays better. Every day he gets better." Granada boss Jose Ramon Sandoval, who had him on loan two seasons ago: "At the age of just 18, he not only knocked at the door, he broke it down." Watford owner Gino Pozzo: "He's not been affected by the huge expectations which he's subject to in South America."

The story so far
A native of the western city of El Vigia, he cut his teeth with junior teams in the Merida region before joining the academy of top-flight outfit Real Esspor, who were then refounded as Deportivo La Guaira, and where he made his first-team debut at 16. For the last couple of years he has been on a European walkabout, either shuttling around the network of clubs run by the Pozzo family (Udinese, Granada – who are now owned by a Chinese group – and Watford) or at Malaga, where he spent the second half of last term on loan. Since early 2016 he has been contracted to Watford but can't play due to work permit issues. With Venezuela he has won a silver medal in the 2013 South American Under-17 Championship, had a starring role with the seniors at last year's centenary edition of the Copa America, and runner-up at the Under-20s.

The next step
As a non-EU citizen he does not have the documentation to play in the Premier League, so a temporary posting is on the cards again.

Strengths
Quick, powerful and bold, he has clever feet and is in his element in one-on-one situations. Versatile forward who is able to play out wide on either flank or through the middle.

Weaknesses
He is guilty at times of playing to the gallery, holding onto the ball too long and spoiling the flow of an attack. Requires much more clarity in his decision-making.

3 THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT PENARANDA

- Early in 2013, at the age of 15, he was one of several young Venezuelans who were invited to have a trial at Real Madrid. Despite looking the part, administrative difficulties scuppered a possible transfer.
- Two years ago, he and Deportivo La Guaira team-mate Charlys Ortiz were shot in an attempted robbery. He suffered a minor injury to his thigh, while Ortiz had to have surgery to have a bullet removed from his rib area.
- In December 2015, his two goals for Granada against Levante made him the youngest player to score a brace in La Liga history, at 18 years and 185 days.

> "Every day he plays better. Every day he gets better"
> Venezuela coach Rafael Dudamel

Alan CERVANTES

Age 19 (17.01.98), midfielder, Leon (on loan from Guadalajara) & Mexico
The defensive midfielder and captain was the cornerstone of his side's march to the last eight, plugging gaps, using the ball intelligently and leading by example.

Federico DIMARCO

Age 19 (10.11.97), defender, Inter & Italy
Competitive left-back who was the supersub hero of Italy's 4-3 victory over Zambia in the quarter-finals, turning the tie on its head with a free-kick equaliser and the assist for Luca Vido's winner. Loaned out to Empoli last season.

Santiago MELE

Age 19 (06.09.97), goalkeeper, Fenix & Uruguay
Helped his side to a fourth-place finish, not only keeping five clean sheets but also saving three consecutive kicks in a shoot-out win against Portugal in the quarter-finals.

Diogo GONCALVES

Age 20 (06.02.97), forward, Benfica & Portugal
Like Luis Figo and Cristiano Ronaldo, he wears number seven and has all the raw ingredients of a top wide man: speed, balance, dribbling ability and an eye for goal.

Josh SARGENT

Age 17 (20.02.00), forward, St Louis Scott Gallagher & USA
Five goals at the CONCACAF Under-17s earned a call-up for South Korea, where he scored a further four times for the under-20 side.

Ademola LOOKMAN

Age 19 (20.10.97), winger, Everton & England
The left-winger had too many weapons for the opposition, not least his adhesive touch with either foot and an ability to shoot with minimum back-lift.

Issa DIOP

Age 20 (09.01.97), defender, Toulouse & France
Tall, physically imposing and strong in the air, Toulouse coach Pascal Dupraz says he wants to make the centre-half his captain but may have to let him go, with Monaco said to be interested.

LEE Seung-woo

Age 19 (06.01.98), midfielder, Barcelona (Spa) & South Korea
A pupil for many years at Barca's La Masia academy, the wing wizard displayed energy, creativity and sharpness in front of goal.

PLAYER BIOGRAPHY

THE LONG HAUL

WORDS: Tim Vickery & Sid Lowe

The Brazilian has played in Madrid for the past decade and won the Champions League three times, but it's taken him a long time to gain the trust of his national side

At a recent event at the HQ of the Brazilian FA, in the presence of such luminaries as Fabio Capello and Marcelo Bielsa, national coach Tite gave a lecture which paused to show three Brazil goals. Two of them came from the much-loved side of 1982 and were full of bewitching midfield elaboration.

The third was the final goal in a 3-0 win over Paraguay at the end of March, a result that sealed Brazil's place in next year's World Cup with four games to go.

The move, a stunning four-man combination, lost nothing in comparison with the memorable moments from 35 years ago.

Wide on the left, Neymar passed square and looped round. Marcelo passed square and burst ahead.

Philippe Coutinho planted forward to Paulinho, who played a sublime backheel into the space behind Paraguay's right-back – space, in part, that opened up due to the crossfield movement of Neymar – and there was Marcelo, one-on-one with the keeper, to score with a delightfully subtle little chip.

It was a

Timeline

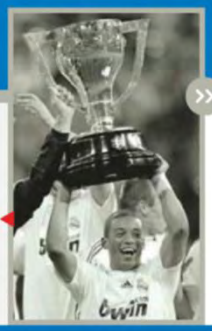
NOV 13, 2005
Replaces Lino at half-time for his Fluminense debut in a 2-0 defeat at Vasco da Gama.

SEP 5, 2006
Scores on his international debut for Brazil in a 2-0 win against Wales at White Hart Lane in London.

NOV 15, 2006
After just 30 games with Fluminense, he signs for Real Madrid.

JAN 7, 2007
Real coach Fabio Capello hands him his debut in a 2-0 win away to Deportivo La Coruna.

MAY 18, 2008
Collects his first silverware with Real Madrid as they win La Liga for the 31st time.



magnificent piece of football. And extraordinarily, more than a decade after his splendid goalscoring international debut, it was the first time Marcelo had found the back of the net for Brazil in a competitive game.

The teenage left-back scored a screamer against Wales at White Hart Lane when making his debut back in September 2006. But even though that was before right-back Dani Alves made his senior international bow, Marcelo has less than half the number of caps of his Brazil team-mate. Indeed, before Tite took over last year, it is striking how few competitive games Marcelo actually played for his country.

With the exception of a single World Cup qualifier in 2009 – after which he was immediately dropped – and another in 2015 – after which he was again immediately dropped – his competitive Brazil career is limited to the cycle under Luiz Felipe Scolari, taking in the 2013 Confederations Cup and the ill-fated World Cup campaign the following year.

Marcelo missed out on the 2009 Confederations Cup squad behind Kleber and Andre Santos, while Michel Bastos and Gilberto were chosen ahead of him for the following year's World Cup. For next year's Copa America he was behind Andre Santos and Adriano, and at the 2015 Copa the left-back slots went to Filipe Luis and Geferson. For last year's Copa Centenario the chosen pair were Filipe Luis and Douglas Santos.

There almost seems an air of "anyone but Marcelo" in some of these call-ups, but what could explain such treatment being dished out to a player who has spent a decade at Real Madrid?

There are two strong explanations, and the first concerns doubts about the player's temperament.

Marcelo first came to prominence in a Brazilian age-group side in 2005. During that year's Under-17 World Cup in Peru he achieved the noteworthy feat of receiving two straight red cards. Both times – in the opening game against Gambia and the Final against Mexico – it happened when Brazil were going down to unexpected defeat. And while he has only been sent off once for the senior national side, there has occasionally been a brittle air about him, especially when the team are losing.

Perhaps many coaches have wondered whether he really could be trusted in the toughest circumstances.

And then there are the questions and doubts about his commitment to the cause. Although it was Dunga who handed him his debut, the national coach's attempts to foster a quasi-military discipline in the ranks meant a left-back with a hairstyle inspired by rapper Lil Wayne was hardly likely to fit in and Marcelo was hardly used in Dunga's two spells in charge (2006-10 and 2014-16).

Photo: Kieran Galvin/REX/Shutterstock

Debut...with Ronaldinho (left)

But after the 2010 World Cup, Dunga was replaced by Mano Menezes and Brazil played a friendly against Scotland in London the following year. Marcelo was part of the first-team set-up but pulled out of the match with a back pain. Yet it seems not to have been a genuine complaint. Marcelo apparently sent an e-mail reporting and commemorating the fact back to Real Madrid – but inadvertently and disastrously copied in the Brazilian coaching staff!

Menezes later confirmed the story in a TV interview, pointing out; "For me and for Brazilians the national team is the most important thing. I want the players to feel this.

"We had a time when we had to put up with players reluctant to be called up, passing messages. If I let this go at the start of my time in charge, then it's not going to end well."

Marcelo's lapse may well have been the consequence of a player fighting for his place at club level and striving to deal with the Real Madrid memory of Roberto Carlos – a huge act to follow. But it may also serve as a comment on the value of international friendlies.

Subsequent events would seem to belie any impression that playing for Brazil is not high on his list of priorities.

Going into the Confederations Cup in 2013, things had finally looked to be turning around for Marcelo on the international stage. He won a place in the starting line-up on the eve of the tournament and in a warm-up friendly against England he replaced Filipe Luis at half-time and kept his place for a 3-0 win against France.

National coach Scolari reflected after those two games that on home ground Brazil would be forced to take the initiative, making it more important to have a full-back such as Marcelo who was capable of making an attacking contribution.

This was borne out just two minutes into the first game of the tournament, when a Marcelo cross, chested down by centre-forward Fred, allowed Neymar to get the campaign off to a flying start. A 3-0 victory over Japan was the first of five wins that culminated in a 3-0 beating of world champions Spain in the Final.

The Final did, however, contain some warning signs. At 1-0, Pedro was slipped in behind Marcelo and only an almost impossible David Luiz clearance off the line prevented the equaliser. And at 3-0 Marcelo gave away a penalty, which Sergio Ramos put wide.

His defensive deficiencies had been exposed, but in the wake of such a triumph it hardly seemed to matter.

In retrospect it seems clear that the Confederations Cup win merely set Brazil up for the fall a year later. They read too much into it, with Scolari declaring that the hard part had already been done, since he had found his team. When the squad assembled for the 2014 World Cup, Scolari's experienced co-ordinator Carlos Alberto Parreira said that Brazil already had

Photo: BEVILACQUA/REX/Shutterstock

FEB 15, 2009
Scores his first goal for Real Madrid in a 4-0 win away to Sporting Gijon.

MAR 16, 2011
Scores his first Champions League goal in a 3-0 win at home to Lyon.

APR 20, 2011
Helps Real Madrid beat Barcelona 1-0 after extra-time to win the Spanish Cup.

AUG 17, 2011
Is sent off after coming on as a sub as Real Madrid lose to Barcelona in the Spanish Super Cup.

AUG 11, 2012
Is in the Brazil team beaten 2-1 by Mexico in the Final at the 2012 Olympics.

Start...as a youngster with Fluminense

one hand on the trophy.

The story of the next few weeks is one of overblown confidence shrivelling in the face of harsh reality – which began when Marcelo scored an own goal in the first few minutes of the opening game against Croatia, inadvertently turning a cross from the right past his own keeper.

And it ended in that scarcely credible epidemic of German goals in the semi-final, when the left-back appeared to be absent without leave.

It may well had been better if Marcelo had been absent for the vital second goal, when he ran uselessly behind the line, playing the Germans onside without defending. For the third goal he was not sufficiently tight to block a cross coming in from his flank. And by the sixth he seemed to have given up altogether.

Brazil appeared to suffer a complete emotional collapse, but Marcelo had special reason to do so. Three days before the game, his grandfather had died and Marcelo had lost one of the most important people in his life, and the most important influence on his career.

Marcelo's is not a favela story. He comes from one of Rio de Janeiro's prestigious neighbourhoods, but, even so, there were limitations and his grandparents played a huge role in bringing him up.

"When I was doing badly in school," he recalls, "my nan would cut all my footballs with a knife.

"Behind her back, granddad Pedro would buy me another one."

And when Pedro saw that his grandson was blessed with real talent, he dedicated himself to the cause. A win on the lottery allowed him to buy a car, which he used to ferry the youngster around to training sessions, especially at the youth facility of the Fluminense club, in Xerem, some way out of the city.

> "At the start I thought to myself: 'Am I really good enough to be here? Is all of this really true?"
>
> **Marcelo on joining Real Madrid**

When Marcelo once thought about giving up and getting involved in normal adolescent escapades, he received some sound advice.

"You're going to keep running your entire life," said his granddad. "If you're not running after a ball you're going to be running after a job, and you're going to get tired."

The hard work and sacrifice began to pay off in late 2005 and early 2006 when Marcelo broke into the Fluminense first team. He made such an impact that Real Madrid quickly came running, and the vast Atlantic Ocean put no distance between him and granddad Pedro.

"We still talk almost every day," recalled Marcelo in 2013, "and always after the matches. When I really miss him I bring him over to Madrid. He loves analysing my matches – and in his mind I'm always the man of the match and I very rarely make a mistake!"

Thrashed...Germany celebrate goal number five

Even Pedro might have struggled to find something good to say about his grandson's performance in that 2014 World Cup semi-final. But maybe Russia 2018 will have a happier ending. He now has a Brazil coach who clearly believes in him, and one capable of fielding a side sufficiently compact to protect the space behind the left-back when he goes on one of his dangerous attacking surges.

And the player also seems to be in the form of his life. By general consensus, last season was the best of Marcelo's 11 campaigns at Real Madrid.

"At the start," he recalls, "I thought to myself, 'am I really good enough to be here?' Is all of this really true?'"

Any such doubts have surely now been banished and he clearly belongs.

It hardly seems plausible that 10 years have passed since Marcelo Vieira da Silva Junior arrived in Spain. It is hard, too, to imagine a time now when he wasn't here, and yet it also feels like it is only relatively recently that he has been truly recognised. But nothing arouses suspicions in football like players who seem to commit the cardinal sin of actually enjoying it.

Yet at not even 30, Marcelo has won more games for Real Madrid than any other foreign player.

Marcelo might never have come to Madrid at all and he might not have stayed either, at least not in the short term. Sevilla thought they had him signed up until the call came from the Santiago Bernabeu. When he got there he was a slim, skinny 19-year old. He looks

JUN 30, 2013

Helps Brazil win the Confederations Cup on home soil as they beat Spain 3-0 in the Final.

MAY 24, 2014

Scores Real Madrid's third goal as they beat city rivals Atletico 4-1 after extra-time to claim a 10th European Cup.

JUN 12, 2014

Puts the ball into his own net in the opening game of the 2014 World Cup, although the hosts eventually beat Croatia 3-1.

JUL 8, 2014

Provides an assist for Oscar's consolation goal, but Brazil are thrashed 7-1 in the World Cup semi-final by Germany.

different now, and it's not just the hair, but some things have not changed: there's still fun in his football. Some were unsure about him, although the man who stood before him was not one of them. Roberto Carlos took him in, looked after him and advised him. He championed him. And then left the path clear for him.

Obstacles kept arising, though. Under Fabio Capello in that first season he only played six times. When Bernd Schuster was coach the next term, with Roberto Carlos having retired, the club wanted Marcelo to go out on loan but he was determined to prove himself and refused. He kept resisting and kept playing.

When Fabio Coentrao came in, it was not to be a sub. Jose Mourinho preferred him and Carlo Ancelotti played him in the European Cup Final in Lisbon. That hurt Marcelo, but by the following year, he was first choice. Now the idea that Coentrao was ever ahead of him feels laughable.

Marcelo learnt too: he once admitted: "I go, I go, I go...and sometimes I forget to come back." The ear-bashings he got from Gabriel Heinze and Fabio Cannavaro were legendary. Mostly, though, he played his game – one he had learnt playing futsal. He kept going with futsal and initially he wasn't keen to switch to eleven-a-side, but fortunately he did when he was 13. His brother-in-law played professionally and Marcelo often joined him, even after reaching Madrid.

Even as attacking full-backs go, he was different – not just an athlete flying up the wing. Instead, he was like a playmaker in an unusual position, prepared to come inside and combine rather than run and cross all game long; not so much bombing out from the back as carrying the ball out from there, touch and technique the key.

Jorge Valdano said: "Marcelo brings the ball out with outstanding naturalness and ease; he goes through the middle of the pitch as if it was his own home and when he gets to the top of the pitch, he has the solutions of a forward.

"We're used to full-backs like Gordillo or Roberto Carlos who plough the wing; Marcelo goes by planting flowers."

There are always doubts about defenders who attack, a kind of prejudice against talent, but slowly Marcelo won people over. Now, it is pretty much everyone. He always had the impossible task of following Roberto Carlos, but now there are those who think Marcelo may even have matched him. In Cardiff, he won his third Champions League medal, equalling Roberto Carlos, who says: "He's more talented than me."

On route, he had led Madrid: his was the late goal that saw them beat Valencia in the final weeks of the league season, the title within touching distance. His was also the run through the middle, hurdling players and laying the ball on a plate for Cristiano Ronaldo for the goal that broke Bayern Munich.

This season was arguably Madrid's most historic, even if it was one that defied easy analysis, shifting through different phases. It finished with them becoming the first team to retain the Champions League and with them winning a league and European Cup double – something that Madrid had not done for 59 years. And Marcelo might just have been their best player.

The night in Cardiff ended with Marcelo dribbling past the defence, to lay on the fourth goal. It was an appropriate way to close the campaign, a moment that defined him and his importance.

It had been fun watching him, in part because it is fun being him. He does not win in spite of that; no, that is why he wins. It's a game, and he is good at it.

"I think you have to enjoy every session, every match, because what we're doing, playing football is fun," he said. "There is tension, there are nerves but football's there to be enjoyed, because this is priceless."

If the 2017-18 season ends on a similar note – with Brazil adding another World Cup to their collection – then Marcelo's career will be complete. WS

Winner...with the Champions League trophy in 2017

> "He brings the ball out with outstanding naturalness and ease; he goes through the middle of the pitch as if it was his own home"
>
> **Jorge Valdano on Marcelo**

Boys from Brazil... (from left) Marcelo, Roberto Carlos and Cicinho at Madrid

DEC 14, 2014
Wins the Club World Cup as Real Madrid beat San Lorenzo 2-0 in the Final.

MAY 28, 2016
Another Champions League win against Atletico as Real win 5-3 on penalties and he scores the second spot-kick.

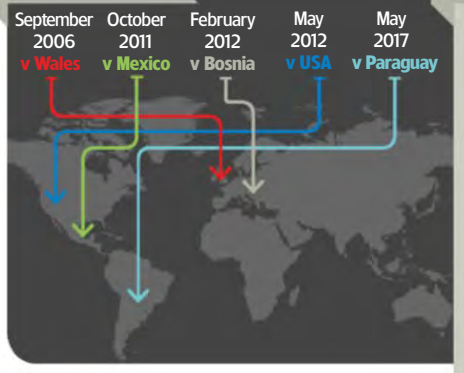
DEC 18, 2016
Real Madrid beat Kashima Antlers 4-2 in extra-time to win the Club World Cup.

JUN 3, 2017
Sets up the fourth goal as Real Madrid win back-to-back Champions League titles with a 4-1 victory over Juventus.

Marcelo

the numbers game

BRAZIL GOALS



BRAZIL

47
CAPS

GOALS
5

ESM TEAM OF THE SEASON 2016–17

HONOURS

Confederations Cup:	2013			
Club World Cup:	2014	2016		
Champions League:	2014	2016	2017	
UEFA Super Cup:	2014	2016		
La Liga:	2007	2008	2012	2017
Copa del Rey:	2011	2014		
Supercopa de Espana:	2008	2012		

OLYMPIAN

Olympic Bronze Medal **2008**

Silver Medal **2012**

LUCKY NUMBER...

WORLD CUP QUALIFIERS

With less than a year to the World Cup finals, there is no margin for error on the road to Russia

ARGENTINA

Sampaoli handed long-term contract and instructions to revive the national side

"How beautiful it is to be near what one admires from afar," said Jorge Sampaoli on his appointment as Argentina's latest national coach. Negotiations between the AFA, Sevilla and the 57-year-old had been a long, drawn out affair. But once concluded, Sampaoli was brimming with patriotic pride and quoting local folk singer Jose Larralde.

The song Sampaoli referenced is about the son of a gaucho, the historic and mythological figure of the Argentinian countryside. Quoting that line was just one of the cultural references linking Sampaoli to his home country. He has lyrics from Argentinian rock bands tattooed on his arm and has spoken of his admiration for the former presidents Nestor and Cristina Fernandez, as well as Che Guevara.

Yet he remains something of an outsider to the nation's football community. He has never coached a top team in his homeland or played for one – something he shares with his captain, Lionel Messi.

Sampaoli's presentation gave him an opportunity to lay out who he was and what he wanted his national team to be. His language was steeped in patriotism, with references to the national flag and colours. He spoke of building a team that respected the tradition of Argentinian football, that supporters related to and, true to his style, that would aim to take control of games.

Sampaoli's coaching CV is impressive. He has won domestic league trophies, continental club titles and international silverware outside his homeland.

After starting out in the lower leagues in Argentina, he made his way up the coaching ladder in Peru and Ecuador before guiding Universidad de Chile to back-to-back league titles and the Sudamericana Cup with an attractive brand of football. Having established his name in Chile, he was the logical replacement for Claudio Borghi with their national team, and at Brazil 2014 *La Roja* defeated reigning champions Spain and almost knocked out hosts Brazil before losing on penalties. The following year he lifted the Copa America as hosts Chile won their first-ever major trophy.

Skipper... Lionel Messi

> "In Argentina there is also the expectancy laid upon the current generation of players – and coach – to deliver silverware"

His season in European football at Sevilla ended in disappointment, with Champions League elimination at the hands of Leicester City and a somewhat acrimonious departure, but his track record stands up.

With Argentina, Sampaoli has various challenges ahead of him.

First he must steer Argentina to qualification for Russia 2018. Having inherited a team that is fifth in the South America group – a position that would secure a play-off berth against a team from Oceania – his first competitive match is a difficult trip to Uruguay in late August.

Pride...patriotic Jorge Sampaoli

In Argentina there is also the expectancy laid upon the current generation of players – and coach – to deliver silverware, assuming the finalists from Brazil 2014 make it to Russia.

The loss at the Maracana by Germany was the first of a trilogy of Final defeats for Argentina in recent years. The second was to Sampaoli's Chile in the Copa America and then again to Chile, this time under the watch of Juan Antonio Pizzi, in the Copa Centenario.

Many fans have little patience with some members of a group of players that

failed to win a title. Indeed, it is widely viewed in that negative logic in Argentina as three failures, rather than the achievement of reaching three Finals in such a short space of time.

A longer-term challenge involves planning and implementing a changing of the guard. Sampaoli's first squad list to face a depleted Brazil side and Singapore in friendly matches was perhaps more informative than those games themselves – 1-0 and 6-0 wins respectively.

Javier Mascherano, who missed the matches through injury, was named among the defenders, so he is set to play for his country where he does for his club, which opens up a position in midfield. Mauro Icardi also featured on the list. The Internazionale striker missed the first matches under Sampaoli through injury, but his on-going omission from the national team is evidently over.

The games against Brazil and Singapore offered little to go on, but Sampaoli has been in part chosen for his trademark high-octane attacking football. An injection of energy and ambition is perhaps what is needed after a conservative and underwhelming short spell under Edgardo Bauza.

Friendly...Angel Di Maria in action against Singapore

One of the conditions, and delays, in reaching an agreement between the AFA and Sampaoli was the length of contract, with the AFA reluctant to cede to the coach's demand of a deal that runs until the 2022 World Cup.

In recent years the turnover of national coaches has matched that of AFA presidents. Julio Grondona passed away in 2014 after over three decades at the helm. Then came interim presidents Luis Segura and Armando Perez, and the recently appointed Claudio "Chiqui" Tapia – and all unveiled new national coaches.

The AFA presidential seat now appears secure for Tapia. The question is whether that brings stability to the national coach.

Joel Williams

CRUNCH TIME FOR URUGUAY AND ECUADOR

Emerging...Ecuador's John Cifuentes takes on El Salvador

A year ago, after their first six games, Uruguay and Ecuador topped South America's World Cup qualification table with 13 points each. After a third of the competition, they already had half the number of points that historically have been enough to go through.

Twelve months and eight games later, neither look so healthy. Uruguay have picked up 10 more points but dropped to third in the table, while Ecuador have acquired just seven more and slumped to sixth, outside even the play-off place.

So, with four rounds to go, both are getting anxious – especially as next up is heavyweight opposition.

At the end of August, Ecuador travel to Brazil, who have cruised to qualification with eight consecutive wins and who have yet to be beaten at home in qualification. Meanwhile, Uruguay face a crunch game at home to Argentina, who are down in fifth but appear revitalised under Jorge Sampaoli and have had Lionel Messi's suspension overturned. Defeat in that game could well leave the Uruguayans in fifth place and looking anxiously over their shoulder.

June's friendlies were, therefore, vital as the two sides looked to regroup.

Uruguay were understrength for their matches against the Republic of Ireland and Italy. Luis Suarez and Diego Godin were injured, and then Edinson Cavani pulled up after 10 minutes of the opening game. But even bearing in mind that they were without their three big names there is still cause for concern.

The side coached by Oscar Tabarez has little margin for error. He is fond of a statistic from his team's run to the 2010 World Cup semi-finals: in every game the opponents had more possession, but Uruguay had more shots. The essentially reactive game plan is one that highlights the need for efficient defence – yet Uruguay have started to concede too many goals. After three consecutive defeats in qualification (nine goals against) they went down 3-1 to the Republic of Ireland and 3-0 to Italy.

One of the long-term symbols of the Tabarez team is little defensive midfielder Egidio Arevalo Rios, who in his mid-30s is close to the end of his international career. Tabarez dropped him for the last World Cup qualifier, against Peru, but brought him back to face Ireland. He was out again against Italy, where Uruguay experimented with Matias Vecino anchoring a 4-1-4-1 formation. But still the team struggled, with the centre-backs frequently exposed by quick, long balls played up to aggressive, mobile opposition strikers. Tabarez, then, will go through an anxious few months pondering on the personnel and shape of his side to take on Argentina.

Uruguay have largely stuck to the group of players that has won the trust of their coach. The last newcomer to start a game in World Cup qualification was Matias Vecino in March last year. Against Ireland and Italy there were caps for people who have been on the fringe of the squad for a while, and even a recall for defender Martin Caceres, but no new faces were brought in.

> With four rounds to go, both are getting anxious – especially as next up is heavyweight opposition

Ecuador took a different approach. The team that started the campaign so well under Gustavo Quinteros was dependent on a handful of stand-out players. The problem is that too many of them have since been struggling for form or fitness.

The idea of the friendlies in the USA, against Venezuela (1-1) and El Salvador (3-0), was to have a look at other

Own goal...Uruguay's Jose Maria Gimenez (out of picture) beats his own keeper, Fernando Muslera

options – and an obvious place to start is the Guayaquil clubs, Barcelona and Emelec, who have been doing so well in the Libertadores Cup.

With centre-back a real problem position, Dario Aimar of Barcelona could be a classy alternative, while club-mate Pedro Velasco was given a chance at right back – another position which has become a headache. And from Emelec, Ayrton Preciado is in the recent tradition of strong, quick and direct Ecuadorian wingers. Even more welcome is the emergence of Jhon Cifuentes, who is in terrific domestic goalscoring form with Universidad Catolica. He marked his first international start with a glorious volley to open the scoring against El Salvador, announcing himself as an interesting option for the remaining World Cup qualifiers.

Enner Valencia also managed to get on the scoresheet, but short of confidence he looks a shadow of the player who scored 11 goals in 11 games either side of and during the 2014 World Cup.

If Ecuador are to make it to 2018 they will need that kind of form from their main striker, and if Valencia is unable to do it then Quinteros is now aware that he can count on a replacement with plenty of potential.

Tim Vickery

SWEDES ENJOYING LIFE AFTER ZLATAN

After a decade and a half of depending on Zlatan Ibrahimovic, Sweden might be in a transitional period – but no way are they suffering because of it.

Courtesy of a last-gasp 2-1 win at home to France in Solna, Sweden currently occupy pole position in Group A – albeit on goal difference – and have to be confident of their first World Cup finals since 2006 in Germany.

Although the visitors dominated for long spells, the Swedes simply refused to buckle, and three minutes into stoppage time they delivered an amazing coup de grace, with Ola Toivonen scoring from long range after a miscued clearance from keeper Hugo Lloris. It later emerged that Toivonen's pre-match preparation had involved persuading the team psychologist to give his boots a pep talk.

"To win this type of match is fantastic," said Sweden midfielder Jimmy Durmaz, who got his side's equaliser – his first goal for the national team in three years. "We knew we would have to make the most of the chances which came our way. The team played really, really well.

"We did a good job breaking on them quickly. The crowd got right behind us, and even late in the game we were still running strongly. All of us kept believing."

Janne Andersson, who succeeded Erik Hamren as coach a year ago, has not rung the revolutionary changes; the old values of 4-4-2, athleticism, rigour and set-piece strength continue to hold sway. But what is different is the democratic vibe in the ranks. Rather than "Zlatan and 10 others", a collective enterprise has emerged. Without the omnipotent Ibra, it probably was the only way to go.

"The responsibilities within the side are much more shared out," says former Sweden keeper Thomas Ravelli, one of the heroes of their spectacular third-place finish at USA 94. "We've gone back to that idea of the unit. It reminds me of the Iceland approach, putting the emphasis on heart and enthusiasm."

Dramatic...Ola Toivonen's winner

France coach Didier Deschamps takes a similar tack, saying: "The Swedes have moved forward as a result of Zlatan's retirement. They are a well-oiled machine and the two front men [Toivonen and Marcus Berg] make for good combination."

Pressure...a free-kick from Emil Forsberg

Andersson is riding a new wave of emerging talent. A number of the under-21 squad which became European champions in 2015 – central defender Victor Lindelof, left-back Ludwig Augustinsson, schemer Oscar Hiljemark and striker John Guidetti – are now making their presence felt at senior level, replacing Ibrahimovic and the old guard, which includes keeper Andreas Isaksson, and midfielders Kim Kallstrom and Anders Svensson.

Arguably the most impressive of the next generation is RB Leipzig attacking midfielder Emil Forsberg. Top of the assist charts in last season's Bundesliga, the 25-year-old has made remarkable progress of late and, liberated by the abdication of King Zlatan, has turned into an element the Swedes cannot do without.

Forsberg is too modest to blow his own trumpet, but Janne Andersson has no such qualms, declaring: "Everyone can see how his game has been evolving. He's been making steady improvements across the board. He's a little quicker, a little stronger, a little more assured on the ball. Tactically, he's coming along too.

"He's an extraordinary player in lots of senses. He has a freewheeling role. He'll make runs, he's busy and quick and has much to offer in the box."

Just the sort of player for a new, exciting chapter for Sweden.

Nick Bidwell

Beaten...France keeper Hugo Lloris

MUSLIN LEADING THE SERBIA REVIVAL

Unbeaten in their first six matches on the road to Russia and level on points with the Republic of Ireland in Group D, Serbia are proving to be a tough nut to crack under coach Slavoljub Muslin. Needless to say, they are a totally different proposition to the disjointed and dysfunctional side which failed to produce the goods in their last three major qualifying campaigns: Euro 2012, World Cup 2014 and Euro 2016.

On taking over from the sacked Radovan Curcic in May last year, Muslin attributed those disastrous results to the poor attitude of the players and promised a reinvigorated mindset. And that's exactly what he has brought about, restoring unity, sense of purpose and work ethic to the squad. The Serbs always had the deep reservoir of talent, with some 50 of them currently earning a living in the top-five European leagues. All it required was for someone to shake them out of their slumbers.

Drawn in a very competitive group that features three Euro 2016 finalists (Wales, Republic of Ireland and Austria) the Serbs' resilience has been there for all to see these past few months, twice scoring late equalisers – both the work of striker Aleksandar Mitrovic – to earn vital draws against Wales, edge out Austria 3-2 in a see-saw encounter in Belgrade and bounce back from a one-goal deficit to win 3-1 in Georgia. They are a side that will not be denied.

"We have the ability, I think, to beat anyone," says the 63-year-old Muslin, a former Red Star Belgrade defender or midfield holder who has been in charge of no fewer than 18 different clubs in France, Belgium, Russia, Ukraine, Cyprus and Bulgaria. "We've not lost a game in qualification and we've our destiny in our own hands.

"We've some very good players. In our group there's no team with more quality than us. We can finish first. For us, every game is important. We need to be fully concentrated and make sure we eliminate individual errors. I want us to be even more efficient. The pressure is on us to keep it going but that's part of the job."

Very much a divisive character during his two spells in charge of Red Star, this time Muslin seems to be making all the correct calls.

His decision to go with a fluid 3-4-2-1 system suits his players and he has constructed his starting XI around a solid core of English-based know-how: veteran defenders Branislav Ivanovic (Chelsea) and Aleksandar Kolarov (Manchester City); engine-room enforcers Nemanja Matic (Chelsea) and Luka Milivojevic (Crystal Palace); brilliant Southampton attacking midfielder Dusan Tadic; and Newcastle United striker Aleksandar Mitrovic, who was the side's top scorer in qualification with five goals.

Tadic, Serbia's Footballer of the Year for 2016, is the undisputed leader of the pack. At the age of 28 he is in the prime of his footballing life and, though nominally stationed on the right flank, he is allowed to blaze a trail hither and thither, scoring four goals in Group D and making another seven. If anyone represents the newly ascendant Serbia it is him. So dedicated to the cause, he even refused to leave the pitch after breaking his nose in Wales last year.

It's is incredible to think that Tadic was declared surplus to requirements by Curcic only last year. Tadic swore he would never play for Serbia as long as Curcic remained in charge and national-team director Savo Milosevic responded by labelling him self-centred, saying: "We don't have room for individuals who think they are God's

> "We have the ability, I think, to beat anyone...we've our destiny in our own hands"
>
> Serbia coach Slavoljub Muslin

Dedicated...Dusan Tadic gets away from Joe Ledley of Wales

Correct call... Slavoljub Muslin

gift." Not that he would remain in exile for long, being restored to his rightful place as soon as Muslin checked in.

"I almost felt like crying when the whole stadium began chanting my name," said Tadic after scoring a fine volleyed winner in the victory over Austria last October. "It's not so important who supplies the goals and assists; what matters is winning. Tactically we're doing well and we can only get better."

With Muslin mainly preferring senior citizens to youth, the youngsters who triumphed at the 2015 World Under-20 Championship are, for the most part, an unused commodity. Muslin's latest squad contained just two of those gold medalists – understudy goalkeeper Predrag Rajkovic and midfielder Mijat Gacinovic – while other key under-20 alumni such as Benfica winger Andrija Zivkovic, newly acquired Valencia schemer Nemanja Maksimovic and Lazio playmaker Sergej Milinkovic-Savic will have to wait their turn.

Muslin argues that too many of the under-20 heroes moved abroad too early. Again, he may just be right.

Nick Bidwell

PETKOVIC RAISES SWISS AMBITIONS

Loyal...Vladimir Petkovic has stood by players who have been out of favour for their club sides

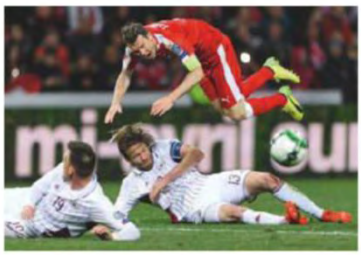
Switzerland coach Vladimir Petkovic has something of the card sharp about him. Even if dealt a poor hand, he regularly scoops the jackpot.

During the past year or so, the 53-year-old Bosnian has had to contend with one selection headache after another: star names struggling for their best form (midfield holder Granit Xhaka, defender Ricardo Rodriguez and forward Xherdan Shaqiri); long-term injuries (strikers Breel Embolo and Josip Drmic); and several players out of favour at club level. But ever the pragmatist, Petkovic has held it all together, steering the side to six wins out of six in Group B, including the scalp of European champions Portugal, who were swept aside 2-0 in Basle.

Not bad at all for a team sporting a cluster of top-flight bench-warmers: Stephan Lichtsteiner is no longer a starter at Juventus; Fabian Schar rarely features for Hoffenheim; Johan Djourou was persona non grata at Hamburg; Valentin Stocker faded from view at Hertha Berlin; while Admir Mehmedi and Haris Seferovic are in and out at Bayer Leverkusen and Eintracht Frankfurt respectively.

Yet as far as Petkovic is concerned, what counts are performance levels for the national team – and as long as those players deliver in red-and-white, he will continue to pick them.

Since taking over in the summer of 2014, Petkovic has fostered a close-knit, club-like group and it shows in his side's understanding and collective discipline on the pitch. Caps have to be earned the hard way and it's no coincidence that he rarely indulges in "one-hit wonders" who are picked in a blaze of publicity and then promptly discarded.



Still going strong...Swiss skipper Stephan Lichtsteiner

Previously in charge of Young Boys and Lazio, among others, Petkovic has turned out to be a much better choice than any Swiss pundit or fan initially would have imagined. When news first broke of his appointment, the general feeling was that he could not possibly match the net worth of some of his forebears in the job. Not as thorough or organised as Roy Hodgson. Not as revered as Swiss legend Kobi Kuhn. Not as decorated as Ottmar Hitzfeld, a Champions League winner with both Borussia Dortmund and Bayern Munich.

With many in the Swiss media sneeringly depicting him second choice because Marcel Koller was not interested in the position, Petkovic was not expected to last long. Some three years and 30 games later, he is more secure than ever. Statistically he is the best *Nati* coach of all-time, with an average of 1.93 points per game. But, above all, he has changed the mentality of the Swiss.

"What we are aiming to do in the rest of the campaign is to maintain the momentum we've built up," he said after a 2-0 win in the Faroe Islands in June.

"We need to keep up the standards of our first six fixtures and to make sure that we don't have to rely on the results of others. The most pleasing part of this game was that we were in control throughout. We dominated and didn't allow them a single chance. My team deserves the utmost respect."

Nick Bidwell

SCRAMBLE IS BECOMING CLEARER

The Asian race to Russia is becoming clearer. With two games remaining, three of the four automatic spots are still up for grabs and five countries are in the hunt.

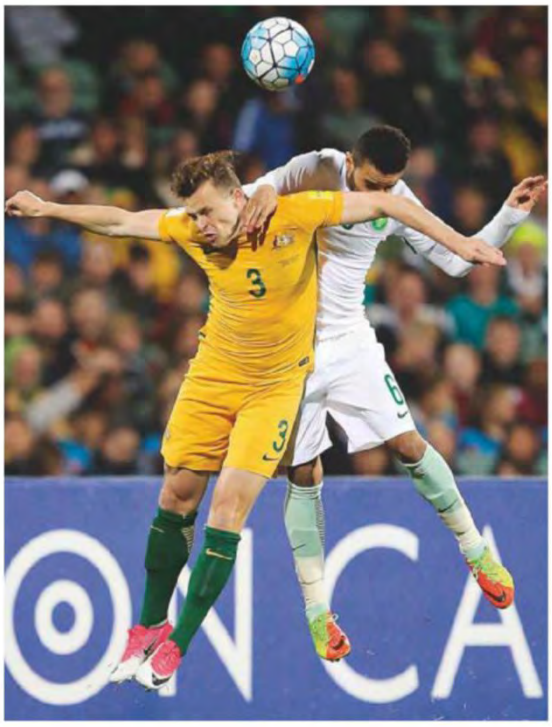
The penultimate round takes place on August 31 with the last matches on September 5. That will leave the two third-placed nations to face each other in October for the right to take on CONCACAF's fourth-placed team in a final showdown in November.

Iran can sit smugly and watch the action unfold. Under Carlos Queiroz they went undefeated in eight Group A games without conceding a single goal. A first back-to-back World Cup spot was clinched in June with a 2-0 win over Uzbekistan that sparked a night of celebration on the streets of Tehran.

Such domination of Group A means that Group B is far more exciting, with three continental powerhouses chasing two spots. And it's tight – Japan are top with 17 points, one more than Saudi Arabia and Australia.

Japan's next game is at home to Australia in the same Saitama stadium where the pair met at the penultimate round four years ago. On that occasion the hosts clinched a place in Brazil with a 1-1 draw in front of 60,000 delighted supporters. The fans will be there once again but this time a point will not be sufficient. Only a win will secure a sixth successive World Cup; anything else will leave much in the air.

Clash...Australia's Brad Smith (left) challenges Mohammed Al Breik of Saudi Arabia



Japan have not been quite as fluent as they usually are, despite their pole position, but then the same can be said of their opponents.

Australia ended a run of three draws with a slightly fortuitous 3-2 win over Saudi Arabia in Adelaide in June and defensive frailties – the kind of which were later seen at the Confederations Cup – have intensified the debate about the three-man backline favoured by coach Ange Postecoglou. Australia may not have won a game in Russia but they improved as the tournament progressed and impressed in a draw with Chile. Japan could only dream of such preparation.

> Australia's defensive frailties have intensified the debate about their three-man backline

Postecoglou likes to change things around and it remains to be seen what team lines up in Japan. The coach always goes for the win but he would be happier than opposite number Vahid Halilhodzic if the game ends all square. A point in Saitama means the Socceroos will qualify with a win at home against bottom-team Thailand in September because Japan's next game is in Saudi Arabia.

Before hosting Japan, the Saudis – who are looking for a first World Cup spot since 2006 – head to Abu Dhabi. The United Arab Emirates still have a theoretical chance of taking third and, on their day, have the talent to beat anyone in Asia, though they lack the consistency to make that happen regularly.

Defeating the Saudis and damaging their rivals' dreams of Russia would help alleviate some of the disappointment about a UAE qualification campaign that promised much but did not quite deliver. But under Bert Van Marwijk, this Saudi team is pragmatic and tough, and – like Australia – they know that a draw will leave final-day destiny in their hands.

With Iran already over the line in Group A, there is one more automatic spot to play for, which is between South Korea and Uzbekistan, with Syria having a very outside chance. Korea occupy second, seven points behind Iran, but

Acrobatic...Qatar defender Mohammed Kasola attempts a spectacular shot against South Korea

are far from comfortable – as seen by the dismissal of coach Uli Stielike in June.

That came after a third defeat in the last five qualifiers proved unacceptable to the Korean FA, which is are hoping for a ninth successive finals appearance. South Korea travelled to Qatar with the chance to move four points clear of Uzbekistan but fell to a 3-2 defeat. Bottom of the group, Qatar have now scored six goals in their eight games with five coming against Korea.

Stielike, in trouble since Korea's first-ever competitive loss to China in March, was soon on his way and there were no complaints from fans bored of rigid tactics, defensive issues and a lack of creativity in attack.

Korea have appointed Under-20 World Cup coach Shin Tae-Yong for the remaining two qualifiers. First up is a home game with Iran, followed by what could be a winner-takes-all showdown in Uzbekistan in September.

Uzbekistan are desperate to qualify for a first World Cup but, as in the past, they have not managed to take advantage of the failings of others and have lost four of eight games so far, scoring just six goals. Against Korea in Tashkent, however, only one may do.

John Duerden

A RECORD-BREAKING QUALIFICATION

Iran booked their place in Russia as winners of Group A with two games in hand. So, in a country where football and politics are both prominent in people's daily life, it was no wonder that two days after the qualification success, the national team was invited to the president's office.

Skipper...Masoud Shojaei (left)

"You changed the heartbeat of 80million Iranians during 90 minutes of football," said the newly re-elected president, Hassan Rouhani. "Now you have the chance to create history. Let's get ready to go beyond the group stages of the World Cup for the first time."

Rouhani also mentioned Iran's memorable performance against Argentina in Brazil 2014. During that tournament he posted a photo of himself on social media, watching the game while wearing the national team shirt rather than the usual clerical robe.

A few hours after meeting the President, national coach Carlos Queiroz sat in front of the media and explained his plans for the future, saying: "Iran have reached the World Cup four times before and have gone out after the group stages every time.

"If we dream of going to the next round, we must act differently. Russia 2018 is a short term target. Our long term target is Qatar 2022."

Iran may have been lucky in avoiding Japan and Australia, being drawn against an underperforming South Korea in the qualifying stage, but nothing was left to luck during their campaign. They qualified without a single defeat, conceding no goals in more than 1,000 minutes, and faced an average of just one shot on target per game. They have topped the FIFA rankings in Asia for four years and Queiroz has claimed: "In Asia the only side that can beat Iran, is Iran's reserve team."

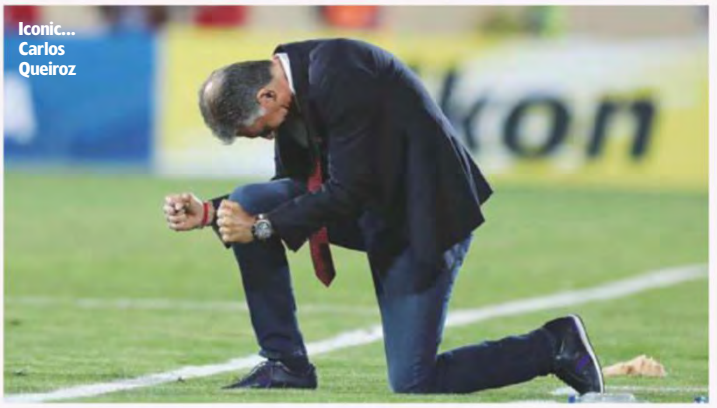
From the side that started against Argentina in Brazil, only Jalal Hosseini and Masoud Shojaei, now captain, started against Uzbekistan a few weeks back and the average age of the side is around 25. Saeid Ezatolahi and Sardar Azmoun, who are both under 23, are definitely ones to watch.

Now 64, Queiroz has put so much into the job and those who know him well say he is a tough, stubborn man. Although he usually has the full support of the public, he has faced criticism from some within the football federation and a section of the media. But with two World Cup qualifications and a 72 per cent win ratio, he is the most successful coach in the history of Iranian football – which makes things much harder for his critics.

During Iran's campaign for Russia 2018 there was a picture which was constantly repeated at times of Iran's victories of Queiroz, on one knee on the touch line, bending down, pumping his fists in celebration.

It's now engraved in the folklore of Iranian football now as the country look forward to next summer.

Adel Ferdowsipour



Iconic... Carlos Queiroz

AFRICA

● *5 finals places available*

3rd round

GROUP A	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
DR Congo	2	2	0	0	6	1	6
Tunisia	2	2	0	0	3	0	6
Guinea	2	0	0	2	1	4	0
Libya	2	0	0	2	0	5	0

Aug 31: Guinea v Libya.
Sep 1: Tunisia v DR Congo.
Sep 4: Libya v Guinea.
Sep 5: DR Congo v Tunisia.
Oct 2: Guinea v Tunisia; Libya v DR Congo.
Nov 6: DR Congo v Guinea; Tunisia v Libya.

GROUP B	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Nigeria	2	2	0	0	5	2	6
Cameroon	2	0	2	0	2	2	2
Zambia	2	0	1	1	2	3	1
Algeria	2	0	1	1	2	4	1

Aug 31: Nigeria v Cameroon.
Sep 2: Zambia v Algeria.
Sep 4: Cameroon v Nigeria.
Sep 5: Algeria v Zambia.
Oct 2: Cameroon v Algeria; Nigeria v Zambia.
Nov 6: Algeria v Nigeria; Zambia v Cameroon.

GROUP C	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ivory Coast	2	1	1	0	3	1	4
Gabon	2	0	2	0	0	0	2
Morocco	2	0	2	0	0	0	2
Mali	2	0	1	1	1	3	1

Sep 1: Morocco v Mali.
Sep 2: Gabon v Ivory Coast.
Sep 5: Ivory Coast v Gabon; Mali v Morocco.
Oct 2: Mali v Ivory Coast; Morocco v Gabon.
Nov 6: Gabon v Mali; Ivory Coast v Morocco.

GROUP D	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Burkina Faso	2	1	1	0	3	1	4
South Africa	2	1	1	0	3	2	4
Senegal	2	1	0	1	3	2	3
Cape Verde Is	2	0	0	2	0	4	0

Sep 1: Cape Verde Islands v South Africa.
Sep 2: Senegal v Burkina Faso.
Sep 5: Burkina Faso v Senegal; South Africa v Cape Verde Islands.
Oct 2: Cape Verde Islands v Senegal; South Africa v Burkina Faso.
Nov 6: Burkina Faso v Cape Verde Islands; Senegal v South Africa.

GROUP E	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Egypt	2	2	0	0	4	1	6
Uganda	2	1	1	0	1	0	4
Ghana	2	0	1	1	0	2	1
Congo	2	0	0	2	1	3	0

Aug 31: Uganda v Egypt.
Sep 1: Ghana v Congo.
Sep 5: Congo v Ghana; Egypt v Uganda.
Oct 2: Egypt v Congo; Uganda v Ghana.
Nov 6: Congo v Uganda; Ghana v Egypt.

● *The 5 group winners will qualify for the finals*

ASIA

● *4.5 finals places available*

3rd round

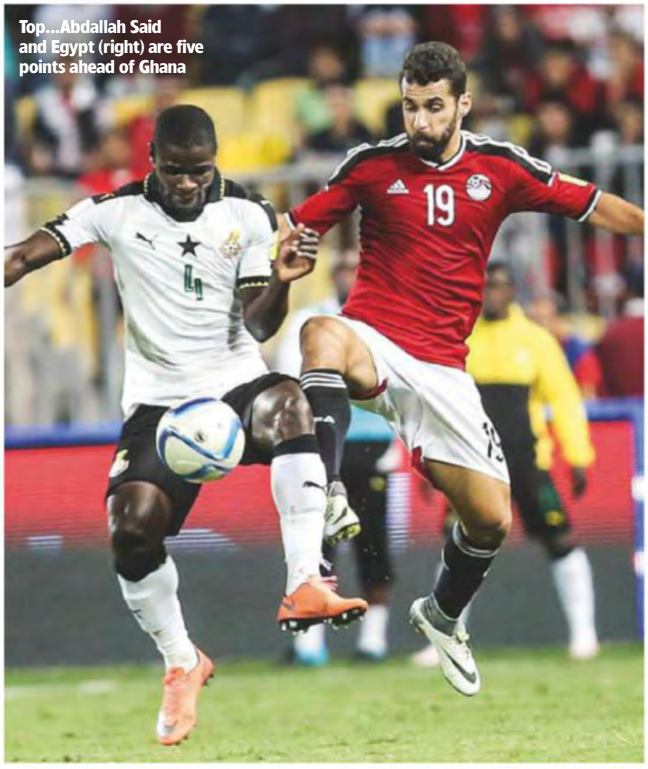
GROUP A	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Iran (QF)	8	6	2	0	8	0	20
South Korea	8	4	1	3	11	10	13
Uzbekistan	8	4	0	4	6	6	12
Syria	8	2	3	3	4	5	9
Qatar	8	2	1	5	6	10	7
China	8	1	3	4	5	9	6

Aug 31: China v Uzbekistan; South Korea v Iran; Syria v Qatar.
Sep 5: Iran v Syria; Qatar v China; Uzbekistan v South Korea.

GROUP B	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Japan	8	5	2	1	15	6	17
Saudi Arabia	8	5	1	2	15	8	16
Australia	8	4	4	0	14	8	16
UAE	8	3	1	4	8	11	10
Iraq	8	1	2	5	8	11	5
Thailand	8	0	2	6	4	20	2

Aug 29: UAE v Saudi Arabia.
Aug 31: Japan v Australia; Thailand v Iraq.
Sep 5: Australia v Thailand; Iraq v UAE; Saudi Arabia v Japan.

● *The top 2 in both groups will qualify for the finals; the 2 3rd-placed countries will meet in the Asia section play-off, the winner of which will meet the 4th-placed CONCACAF country in a play-off for a place in the finals*


Top...Abdallah Said and Egypt (right) are five points ahead of Ghana

Heavyweights...Italy (in blue) and Spain

CONCACAF

● *3.5 finals places available*

5th round

CONCACAF – 5TH ROUND	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Mexico	6	4	2	0	9	2	14
Costa Rica	6	3	2	1	9	4	11
United States	6	2	2	2	11	8	8
Panama	6	1	4	1	4	4	7
Honduras	6	1	2	3	6	14	5
Trinidad & Tob	6	1	0	5	3	10	3

Sep 1: Mexico v Panama; Trinidad & Tobago v Honduras; United States v Costa Rica.
Sep 5: Costa Rica v Mexico; Honduras v United States; Panama v Trinidad & Tobago.
Oct 6: Costa Rica v Honduras; Mexico v Trinidad & Tobago; United States v Panama.
Oct 10: Honduras v Mexico; Panama v Costa Rica; Trinidad & Tobago v United States.

● *The top 3 will qualify for the finals; the 4th-placed country will meet the winner of the Asia section play-off in a play-off for a place in the finals*

EUROPE

● *13 finals places available (excluding the place for hosts* **Russia***, who qualify automatically)*

GROUP A	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sweden	6	4	1	1	12	4	13
France	6	4	1	1	11	5	13
Holland	6	3	1	2	13	6	10
Bulgaria	6	3	0	3	9	12	9
Belarus	6	1	2	3	4	11	5
Luxembourg	6	0	1	5	6	17	1

Second best... Colombia (in yellow)

Battle...USA's Christian Pulisic

Aug 31: Bulgaria v Sweden; France v Holland; Luxembourg v Belarus.
Sep 3: Belarus v Sweden; France v Luxembourg; Holland v Bulgaria.
Oct 7: Belarus v Holland; Bulgaria v France; Sweden v Luxembourg.
Oct 10: France v Belarus; Holland v Sweden; Luxembourg v Bulgaria.

GROUP B	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Switzerland	6	6	0	0	12	3	18
Portugal	6	5	0	1	22	3	15
Hungary	6	2	1	3	8	7	7
Faroe Islands	6	1	2	3	2	10	5
Andorra	6	1	1	4	2	13	4
Latvia	6	1	0	5	2	12	3

Aug 31: Hungary v Latvia; Portugal v Faroe Islands; Switzerland v Andorra.
Sep 3: Faroe Islands v Andorra; Hungary v Portugal; Latvia v Switzerland.
Oct 7: Andorra v Portugal; Faroe Islands v Latvia; Switzerland v Hungary.
Oct 10: Hungary v Faroe Islands; Latvia v Andorra; Portugal v Switzerland.

Close...Japan (in blue) and Australia

GROUP C	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Germany	6	6	0	0	27	1	18
N Ireland	6	4	1	1	11	2	13
Czech Rep	6	2	3	1	9	5	9
Azerbaijan	6	2	1	3	3	9	7
Norway	6	1	1	4	6	10	4
San Marino	6	0	0	6	1	30	0

Sep 1: Czech Republic v Germany; Norway v Azerbaijan; San Marino v Northern Ireland.
Sep 4: Azerbaijan v San Marino; Germany v Norway; Northern Ireland v Czech Republic.
Oct 5: Azerbaijan v Czech Republic; Northern Ireland v Germany; San Marino v Norway.
Oct 8: Czech Republic v San Marino; Germany v Azerbaijan; Norway v Northern Ireland.

GROUP D	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Serbia	6	3	3	0	13	7	12
Rep Ireland	6	3	3	0	8	4	12
Wales	6	1	5	0	9	5	8
Austria	6	2	2	2	9	8	8
Georgia	6	0	3	3	6	10	3
Moldova	6	0	2	4	4	15	2

Sep 2: Georgia v Republic of Ireland; Serbia v Moldova; Wales v Austria.
Sep 5: Austria v Georgia; Moldova v Wales; Republic of Ireland v Serbia.
Oct 6: Austria v Serbia; Georgia v Wales; Republic of Ireland v Moldova.
Oct 9: Moldova v Austria; Serbia v Georgia; Wales v Republic of Ireland.

GROUP E	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Poland	6	5	1	0	15	7	16
Montenegro	6	3	1	2	14	7	10
Denmark	6	3	1	2	10	6	10
Romania	6	1	3	2	7	7	6
Armenia	6	2	0	4	7	14	6
Kazakhstan	6	0	2	4	4	16	2

Sep 1: Denmark v Poland; Kazakhstan v Montenegro; Romania v Armenia.
Sep 4: Armenia v Denmark; Montenegro v Romania; Poland v Kazakhstan.
Oct 5: Armenia v Poland; Montenegro v Denmark; Romania v Kazakhstan.
Oct 8: Denmark v Romania; Kazakhstan v Armenia; Poland v Montenegro.

GROUP F	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
England	6	4	2	0	10	2	14
Slovakia	6	4	0	2	12	4	12
Slovenia	6	3	2	1	6	3	11
Scotland	6	2	2	2	9	10	8
Lithuania	6	1	2	3	6	11	5
Malta	6	0	0	6	2	15	0

Sep 1: Lithuania v Scotland; Malta v England; Slovakia v Slovenia.
Sep 4: England v Slovakia; Scotland v Malta; Slovenia v Lithuania.
Oct 5: England v Slovenia; Malta v Lithuania; Scotland v Slovakia.
Oct 8: Lithuania v England; Slovakia v Malta; Slovenia v Scotland.

GROUP G	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Spain	6	5	1	0	21	3	16
Italy	6	5	1	0	18	4	16
Albania	6	3	0	3	7	8	9
Israel	6	3	0	3	9	12	9
Macedonia	6	1	0	5	8	13	3
Liechtenstein	6	0	0	6	1	24	0

Sep 2: Albania v Liechtenstein; Israel v Macedonia; Spain v Italy.
Sep 5: Italy v Israel; Liechtenstein v Spain; Macedonia v Albania.
Oct 6: Italy v Macedonia; Liechtenstein v Israel; Spain v Albania.
Oct 9: Albania v Italy; Israel v Spain; Macedonia v Liechtenstein.

GROUP H	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Belgium	6	5	1	0	24	2	16
Greece	6	3	3	0	10	3	12
Bosnia-Herz	6	3	2	1	13	5	11
Cyprus	6	2	1	3	5	9	7
Estonia	6	1	1	4	5	17	4
Gibraltar	6	0	0	6	3	24	0

Aug 31: Belgium v Gibraltar; Cyprus v Bosnia-Herzegovina; Greece v Estonia.
Sep 3: Estonia v Cyprus; Gibraltar v Bosnia-Herzegovina; Greece v Belgium.
Oct 7: Bosnia-Herzegovina v Belgium; Cyprus v Greece; Gibraltar v Estonia.
Oct 10: Belgium v Cyprus; Estonia v Bosnia-Herzegovina; Greece v Gibraltar.

GROUP I	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Croatia	6	4	1	1	11	2	13
Iceland	6	4	1	1	9	6	13
Turkey	6	3	2	1	11	6	11
Ukraine	6	3	2	1	9	5	11
Finland	6	0	1	5	4	10	1
Kosovo	6	0	1	5	3	18	1

Sep 2: Croatia v Kosovo; Finland v Iceland; Ukraine v Turkey.
Sep 5: Iceland v Ukraine; Kosovo v Finland; Turkey v Croatia.
Oct 6: Croatia v Finland; Kosovo v Ukraine; Turkey v Iceland.
Oct 9: Finland v Turkey; Iceland v Kosovo; Ukraine v Croatia.

● *The 9 group winners will qualify for the finals; the 8 runners-up with the best record (against the countries finishing1st, 3rd, 4th & 5th in the respective groups) will be paired in 4 play-offs, the winners of which will also qualify for the finals*

OCEANIA

● *0.5 finals places available*

3rd round

GROUP A – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
N Zealand (Q)	4	3	1	0	6	0	10
New Caledonia	4	1	2	1	4	5	5
Fiji	4	0	1	3	3	8	1

GROUP B – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Solomon Is (Q)	4	3	0	1	6	6	9
Tahiti	4	2	0	2	7	4	6
Papua NG	4	1	0	3	6	9	3

● *The 2 group winners will meet in the Oceania section play-off*

Oceania section play-off

Sep 1: 1st leg - New Zealand v Solomon Islands
Sep 5: 2nd leg - Solomon Islands v New Zealand

● *The winner will meet the 5th-placed South American country in a play-off for a place in the finals*

SOUTH AMERICA

● *4.5 finals places available*

SOUTH AMERICA	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Brazil (QF)	14	10	3	1	35	10	33
Colombia	14	7	3	4	18	15	24
Uruguay	14	7	2	5	26	17	23
Chile	14	7	2	5	24	19	23
Argentina	14	6	4	4	15	14	22
Ecuador	14	6	2	6	23	20	20
Peru	14	5	3	6	22	23	18
Paraguay	14	5	3	6	13	21	18
Bolivia	14	3	1	10	12	32	10
Venezuela	14	1	3	10	17	34	6

Aug 31: Brazil v Ecuador; Chile v Paraguay; Peru v Bolivia; Uruguay v Argentina; Venezuela v Colombia.
Sep 5: Argentina v Venezuela; Bolivia v Chile; Colombia v Brazil; Ecuador v Peru; Paraguay v Uruguay.
Oct 5: Argentina v Peru; Bolivia v Brazil; Chile v Ecuador; Colombia v Paraguay; Venezuela v Uruguay.
Oct 10: Brazil v Chile; Ecuador v Argentina; Paraguay v Venezuela; Peru v Colombia; Uruguay v Bolivia.

● *The top 4 will qualify for the finals; the 5th-placed country will meet the winner of the Oceania section play-off in a play-off for a place in the finals*

KEY TO TABLES
(Q) = qualified for next stage
(QF) = qualified for finals

Almost there...New Zeland face Solomon Islands for a place in the play-offs

Facetoface

FERNANDO SANTOS

"Ronaldo won't retire in a hurry. Portugal can count on him for another four years"

Portugal's national coach on being European champions, next year's World Cup and managing the world's best player

A year on from Euro 2016, how do you look back on the tournament?
As victorious. I think of it every day. Portugal became the European champions and delighted the Portuguese people.

What was Portugal's most difficult game of that campaign?
The game with Hungary was definitely the most complicated. At all levels, we could have won or lost. Three times Portugal were out of the championship during the match. That was the most difficult, but the games against both Croatia and France were of a similar difficulty level.

At what moment did you feel Portugal would become European champions?
It was not a question of becoming champions. I had always said and thought that Portugal could go on to win the tournament. There are no certainties in life, and it's difficult to know, but I always had that strong conviction. Portugal needed to believe and had the obligation of believing that they could win Euro 2016.

In the Final against France, Portugal were without Cristiano Ronaldo for much of the game but still managed to win. But is the team still too reliant on him?
Portugal didn't win without Cristiano Ronaldo. He played in the Final, got injured and that filled us with sadness. Every team in the world is dependent on its best players. Cristiano Ronaldo is the best player in the world. In all the teams, the best players are decisive, influential and determined on merit, and that is still the case with Ronaldo for Portugal.

What is his main quality?
His talent. In life, in art, in music, you can only become a genius when you have a lot of talent; talent that is out of the ordinary. It's done with a lot of work. That is the main characteristic of geniuses – they have an infinite talent and they merge that with their enormous capacity to work. That's what Ronaldo has: an immeasurable aptitude and that capacity to work – which he has shown from the age of 16 and 17, and has maintained, intact, until today. He has a sporting spirit and the innate spirit of a winner.

In recent seasons he has become a true striker, both at Real Madrid and with the national team...
Two years ago I began playing Ronaldo as a mobile and more advanced striker with the national team. That was questioned because Ronaldo was a winger. He wasn't mobile enough, he wasn't a player who operated close to the box. I always said to him that at this stage of your career this position should be your preferred position. I felt that Ronaldo was never going to be a *ponta-de-lança* ("spearhead"), but nor was he going to remain a winger. He had to try to be a more advanced player, clearly a mobile player closer to the box and the goal. He has done so brilliantly and it's with great satisfaction that I see people recognise this now. At this moment the best solution is to let him play as he wants.

Have you been surprised by him playing that role this season at Real Madrid?
Ronaldo never surprises me. I coached him in the 2003-04 season at Sporting in Lisbon. Sadly, I worked with Ronaldo for just a month and a half, but I was already impressed by him when I saw his immense abilities. He was going to have a brilliant career and so today nothing about Ronaldo impresses me anymore.

Ronaldo got injured in the 2016 Euro Final. At the 2014 World Cup, in Brazil, he also struggled with injuries. Are players forced to play too many games these days?
What happened in the Final of Euro 2016 had little to do with Brazil. Ronaldo got a knock. It was a collision between two players and was an abnormal injury. The number of games isn't an issue of today, it's an old issue. You require a balance. The number of games is very big and demands a big physical input from the players. All of us coaches have to seek a perfect balance. The clubs always feel that the national teams play too many games, the national teams always believe they play less and less games. You have to find a good balance because it is very important to maintain that competitive level at club level; and for world football that the national teams keep up their level. It would be better if there were a few less games, but this is the way it is.

What then is the importance of a tournament like the Confederations Cup?
It is a meeting of the continental champions. There were three European teams and the other confederations each had one representative.

Before the Confederations Cup in Russia, Germany coach Joachim Low criticised the international fixture calendar and the expansion to a 48-team World Cup...
I also think that the Confederations Cup is too quick a competition. You have three games in seven days. That is different from the World Cup and the European Championship, where you have a first round and then the knock-out phase. The scheduling is different. Before a World Cup and a European Championship you don't have competitive matches. You have sufficient time to prepare and for the players to recover physically and mentally. Six, seven days before the Confederations Cup, teams participated in very important matches that will have a bearing on World Cup qualification. That is another difficulty, a distinct complication. It's an issue for the future. Teams participating in the Confederations Cup should perhaps not have to play official matches before the tournament. In truth, it really complicates our work. The [World Cup] expansion to 48 teams won't force teams to play more matches to reach the Final. The recuperation time between games will remain the same. I have nothing to criticise. Those two ➤

considerations are essential: the World Cup won't have more games [per team] and the teams will enjoy the same interval between matches.

After Euro 2016 you reintroduced Bernardo Silva, who moved from Monaco to Manchester City this summer. Can he become Portugal's new leader in the future?
Bernardo Silva didn't play at Euro 2016 because he was injured. There were players who had never played at a major tournament, players who were below 21 and who have continued to play for the national team. For us it is about the group of players who can guarantee the future, and Bernardo Silva is obviously among them because of his quality. Bernardo Silva and Monaco had a great season. They won the French league and played in the semi-finals of the Champions League.

What is Silva's main quality?
He is a pure talent, with an evolving technique. He is very natural for a player of his age [22]. Today he is more balanced than two years ago and in the next few years he will get even more balanced.

On the other hand, Renato Sanches had a bad season at Bayern Munich...
Within the expectations of people it was normal. He is a European champion. He was expected to play more, but don't forget that he only began playing regularly in January 2016 at Benfica. That was just a few months before Euro 2016. So it is normal, it always happens, with few caps and with youngsters, a big explosion and then a drop until stabilisation. He went to play for a big club in a country that he doesn't know well, in which he doesn't know the language. At 19 years of age he is very new. These are all factors, but he didn't play a season you'd wish for. I am convinced though that he will work more to get to play more again.

In the World Cup qualifiers, you lost your opening game 2-0 in Switzerland. What happened?
Switzerland were better than us. Portugal began as the better side, perhaps, playing very well for 15 minutes. The Swiss managed to score twice from a counter-attack and from then on were very good. They were deserving and controlled the game. Portugal tried and tried but didn't succeed. Switzerland are top of the group and are having an excellent qualification campaign. But Portugal still have their fate in their own hands. If we win all our remaining games we will finish first – and that's what we want to do.

Talent...Bernardo Silva has joined Manchester City

The best... Cristiano Ronaldo

So you believe that Portugal will qualify for the finals in Russia?
Yes, we have our fate in our own hands. It doesn't depend on our opponents winning or losing. If we win our games, we have qualified. You don't have that certainty, but I have the confidence that we are capable.

Even as European champions, you say that Portugal will never dominate European football. Why?
It is about scale, dimension and capacity. It is very different between countries. A country like Portugal, any country like Portugal with 10 million inhabitants, has smaller resources than one with 50 or a 100 million inhabitants. That way, Germany, Italy, England, Spain and France will always be the favourites. It has a lot to do with the squads, and if you have less resources it will also mean that the quality may drop at times.

One day Ronaldo will retire. How can Portugal guarantee a natural process of renovation?
That process of renovation is hypothetical. It doesn't count much for me. I have already been doing this for some time. At Euro 2016 two players in the squad had never participated in a major finals. There were a lot of youngsters. Ronaldo won't retire in a hurry. Portugal can count on Ronaldo for another four years.

So Ronaldo will keep playing, and be influential, for Portugal until Euro 2020?
All coaches are unanimous in recognising that you need to set up your team to get the most out of your best players. It can't be any different. Everyone knows this. Every coach moulds his team in relation to his best players. When you have the best player in the world, it would be abnormal if he didn't have that influence.

At one point in your life you wanted to be an engineer. When did you decide to become a coach?
I am engineer. I was also a player or a coach at

the same time of being an engineer. During that phase of my life, between 1981 and 1997, my life wasn't only about sports. To the contrary, engineering was a big part of my life. That year I received an offer from FC Porto and I had to decide if I was going to continue with engineering or become a full-time football coach. I took a final decision and did what I did.

Has your engineering background influenced your approach to football?
My function as engineer – with the responsibility for repair and maintenance of the hotels where I worked – was about leadership. I worked with young people and led groups of people for more than 25 years. I had more than 100 people under me.

The English coach Jimmy Hagan was an inspiration for you. Why?
I had a strong connection with him because at that time he emphasised a way of life: the demands of training and the need to work. He was an intelligent man, but I also liked his human side. He treated everyone as equal.

You spent a lot time in Greece with club sides and then the national team. What did you learn?
Those who don't want to learn, won't learn. A phrase of Socrates influenced my stay in Greece: "In knowing you know nothing." That phrase was important for my development as a man and a coach. There are always a lot of things that you can learn. I learnt a lot of things, the way of life and your duties, and that also helped me during my reign as coach of the Greek national team, to fit in terms of football and with getting better.

Man of faith...Fernando Santos

Inspiration...Benfica boss Jimmy Hagan (centre)

What is your coaching philosophy?
Win, win and win.

Anything else?
The rest is about strategy. In my role, winning is the objective, so to develop a strong collective is important, but also while keeping the individual creativity of the players. You can't lose sight of that because in a lot of matches the individual creativity will make the difference. But everything has to be constructed within a strong collective.

Last year, during Euro 2016, Portugal received plenty of criticism for being overly defensive and too pragmatic...
I watched a match between two of the best teams that also had problems, Italy and Germany, and the German coach played with a totally different system than in his previous games. That is normal. Can you call this pragmatism? I think so. When Portugal use strategy it is pragmatism. It was unfounded criticism because after the first two matches Portugal had the most crosses and the most corner kicks. So how could Portugal be a tentative, counter-attacking team? During a match, one team is more defensive and the other team is more attacking. That is normal.

Is there too much emphasis on ball possession in the modern game?
Football is a bit like fashion trends. It is obvious that having possession is important because without the ball it's difficult. Today there are those who consider speed and counter-attacking very important. You can sway one way or the other. You have less and less space and time – that is what's changing in football today.

You are a catholic. How do you integrate your faith in your work?
Faith is part of my life, work is part of my life, but there is not so much integration. I understand the question, but it is part of my conviction and way of life. I believe in God and in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. That is my faith.

You have said that a man of faith doesn't fear anything...
A man of faith doesn't need to fear what is going to happen. Life and football are a journey, with ups and downs, and we have to keep walking until we reach the end.

Do you go to church on Sundays?
Yes, always.

Interview by Samindra Kunti

Glenn Moore

Can *Les Bleues* overcome their German hoodoo?

France and Germany start favourites for Euro 2017

When, in the wake of another tournament failure, France appointed Olivier Echouafni as coach, it seemed an odd choice. The 44-year-old's experience consisted of brief spells at men's clubs Amiens and Sochaux, neither top flight at the time, and his strongest link to the female game was as "patron of the women's section" when a player at Nice.

Odd, but perhaps inspired. France, hugely talented but so often chokers on the grand stage, head into this summer's European Championship, which takes place in Holland from July 16 to August 6, looking as though they may finally realise their rich potential.

Les Bleues are the female equivalent of Spain's men prior to 2008: a delight to watch, brimming with quality, tipped for every tournament...but always falling short. *La Roja* cracked it at Euro 2008 and promptly set off on a silverware spree; France's female footballers have the ability to do the same, not least as they host the 2019 Women's World Cup, but they must break the dam first.

Dangerous outsiders ...Norway

French clubs are already dominant in Europe. Lyon are back-to-back Champions League winners and this year's beaten finalists were domestic rivals Paris Saint-Germain. The bulk of their squad comes from these clubs and they have the confidence boost of winning the SheBelieves Cup in March. It may have been a friendly tournament, but was a prestigious one, and France's 3-0 demolition of their USA hosts, the reigning world champions, stunned women's football.

Holders...Germany

Semi-final placings at the 2011 World Cup and 2012 Olympics suggested France were on the verge of a breakthrough, but they were then knocked out at the quarter-final stage in the 2013 European Championship, 2015 World Cup and 2016 Olympics.

That forced the sacking of coach Phillipe Bergeroo, followed by Echouafni's unexpected appointment. Echouafni, who preaches hard work and humility, appears to have healed internal divisions within the squad, to the extent he can say: "Being humble doesn't mean you can't be ambitious. We have the quality to beat any team, which we showed by winning the SheBelieves Cup.

"A lot of people were waiting to watch us and see how good this France team is. We sent a message: 'Here's how good we are. We're preparing ourselves and we want to do well.'"

Rather like England men's golden generation, penalties have frequently been France's downfall, with three of their last six tournament exits coming in

EURO 2017: FIXTURES

Group A
The Dutch will play to sell-out crowds in an even, hard-to-predict group featuring the last winners other than Germany – Norway, in 1993.

Jul 16	Holland v Norway
	Denmark v Belgium
Jul 20	Norway v Belgium
	Holland v Denmark
Jul 24	Belgium v Holland
	Norway v Denmark

Group B
Germany and Sweden, the 2016 Olympic finalists, should progress with ease. Russia, at their first major tournament, will hope not to be embarrassed.

Jul 17	Italy v Russia
	Germany v Sweden
Jul 21	Sweden v Russia
	Germany v Italy
Jul 25	Russia v Germany
	Sweden v Italy

Group C
Switzerland are the strongest of five Euro debutants and could edge out 2013 quarter-finalists Iceland to qualify behind France.

Jul 18	Austria v Switzerland
	France v Iceland
Jul 22	Iceland v Switzerland
	France v Austria
Jul 26	Iceland v Austria
	Switzerland v France

Group D
England should win the group with Spain most likely to progress with them.

Jul 19	Spain v Portugal
	England v Scotland
Jul 23	Scotland v Portugal
	England v Spain
Jul 27	Portugal v England
	Scotland v Spain

Quarter-finals: Jul 29 & 30 **Semis:** Aug 3 **Final:** Aug 6

Favourites...France's Amandine Henry (left) and Linda Dallmann of Germany

Three to watch

VIVIANNE MIEDEMA *(Holland)*
Quick and deadly, with 39 goals in 50 international appearances, she is the great home hope. Not 21 until the day before Euro 2017 opens, Miedema will join Arsenal next season after three years at Bayern Munich.

JORDAN NOBBS *(England)*
An energetic midfielder, often used wide by England, who scores spectacular goals. With injury restricting her at the 2015 World Cup, she will be keen to make an impact. Her father, Keith, played for Halifax Town and Hartlepool United.

WENDIE RENARD *(France)*
A commanding central defender, the captain of France and Lyon has a presence that belies her 26 years. Dangerous at set-pieces, she was born and grew up on the Caribbean island of Martinique.

Hopeful... Jodie Taylor

shoot-outs. Should the 12-yard test face them again they should not lack for experience. Ten of the squad, including keeper Sarah Bouhaddi, are from Lyon, who in May won the Champions League and Coupe de France on penalties. However, four of the squad play for PSG, vanquished each time.

The real cloud on France's horizon is not penalties but Germany, the reigning Olympic champions and winners of the last six European Championships. With the pair seeded to meet in the semi-finals, France have yet to beat Germany in a major tournament, but they will take heart from a sense that the 2013 winners are still adjusting after the retirement of coach Sylvia Neid.

Steffi Jones, a three-time Euro winner as a player, has taken over. From the XI that started the Olympic Final under Neid she must do without Simone Laudehr and Melanie Leupolz, who are injured, plus Saskia Bartusiak, Annike Krahn and Melanie Behringer, who all retired from international football after Rio. Nevertheless, they remain the team to beat and start co-favourites with France.

England will be fancied to progress from the other half of the draw. The Lionesses, aided by heavy investment by the FA, and several leading clubs, have improved rapidly under Mark Sampson. And while their 2015 World Cup bronze was unexpected, this time they are seen as contenders.

> "Being humble doesn't mean you can't be ambitious. We have the quality to beat any team"
>
> France coach Olivier Echouafni

England did reach the Final in 2009 but were thrashed 6-2 by Germany. This team is markedly more resilient and are beginning to address their main weakness: an inability to score against elite teams. Much depends on keeping strikers Fran Kirby and Jodie Taylor fit, but Sampson will ensure the team are exhaustively prepared and tactically unpredictable.

England open against Scotland, which will help to spark UK interest. The Scots are very much underdogs, especially as their build-up was marred by a dispute with the Scottish FA, and the loss of Kim Little, their only world-class player, to a ruptured anterior cruciate ligament.

A familiar feature of the women's game, ACL injuries have cost Iceland three players, including all-time top scorer Margret Lara Vidarsdottir and her sister Elisa. "This sucks, as simple as that," Vidarsdottir said. French striker Delphine Cascarino, Swiss defender Selina Kuster and Manchester City's Dutch midfielder Tessel Middag are among others ruled out with similar injuries.

Several countries will be relying on individual stars. At 22, Ada Hegerberg, UEFA's player of the year, carries the bulk of Norway's hopes, while Denmark's attack is led by Portland Thorns' Nadia Nadim and Pernille Harder, who is fresh from leading Wolfsburg to a league and cup double. Switzerland's reliance on the German club's Lara Dickenmann and Chelsea's Ramona Bachmann was evident in a 4-0 home drubbing by England. Home hopes meanwhile, centre on Vivianne Miedema.

Teamwork, rather than individual brilliance, will be at the heart of Sweden's challenge. Surprise silver medallists at Rio, they are coached by guitar-playing veteran Pia Sundhage, who steered the USA to Olympic and world triumphs.

The coach's experience, and the squad's unity and depth, make them the most likely team to join France Germany and England in the last four, with the hosts and Norway the most dangerous outsiders. WS

Surprise...France coach Olivier Echouafni

World Soccer vintage 56 years ago

July 1961

Hungarian winger is country's great new hope

The front cover had a picture of West German winger Gert Dorfel beating Angelos Anastasiadis of Greece to the ball in a World Cup qualifier which Germany won 3-0.

Inside, Eric Batty penned a profile of Hungarian winger Karoly Sandor, on whose shoulders rested the hopes of a nation after the defection of Ferenc Puskas, Sandor Kocsis and Zoltan Czibor to Spain.

"At frequent intervals the world's press turns the spotlight on flying wingers and arguments rage about who is the fleetest of them all," wrote Batty.

"One name always mentioned is that of Karoly Sandor, a strong candidate in these stakes and unquestionably the fastest player in central Europe.

"He presents unusual problems every week to the host of full-backs that face him and, though all manner of manoeuvres have been attempted, nothing less than two men have been known to hold him in check when he is at his best."

In describing Sandor's style, Batty explained: "He prefers to have a team colleague in close attendance so that, drawing close to his opponent, he can either beat him and leave him on the turn, or use the 'touch and go' technique that will carry him clear of the defender and in full cry after the return pass."

Sandor was discovered in 1949 by Marton Bukovi, coach of Voros Lobogo – who would later become MTK – while playing for a junior club in his home-town of Szeged. Bukovi arranged for him to move to Budapest, working out a training programme that was specifically designed to utilise his amazing pace.

"Sandor would never have made a winger of the Matthews-Finney-Julinho type for his technique was developed too late," continued Batty. "But now, at 32, he uses his assets judiciously, varies his game intelligently and never ceases to seek an opportunity to move in on goal."

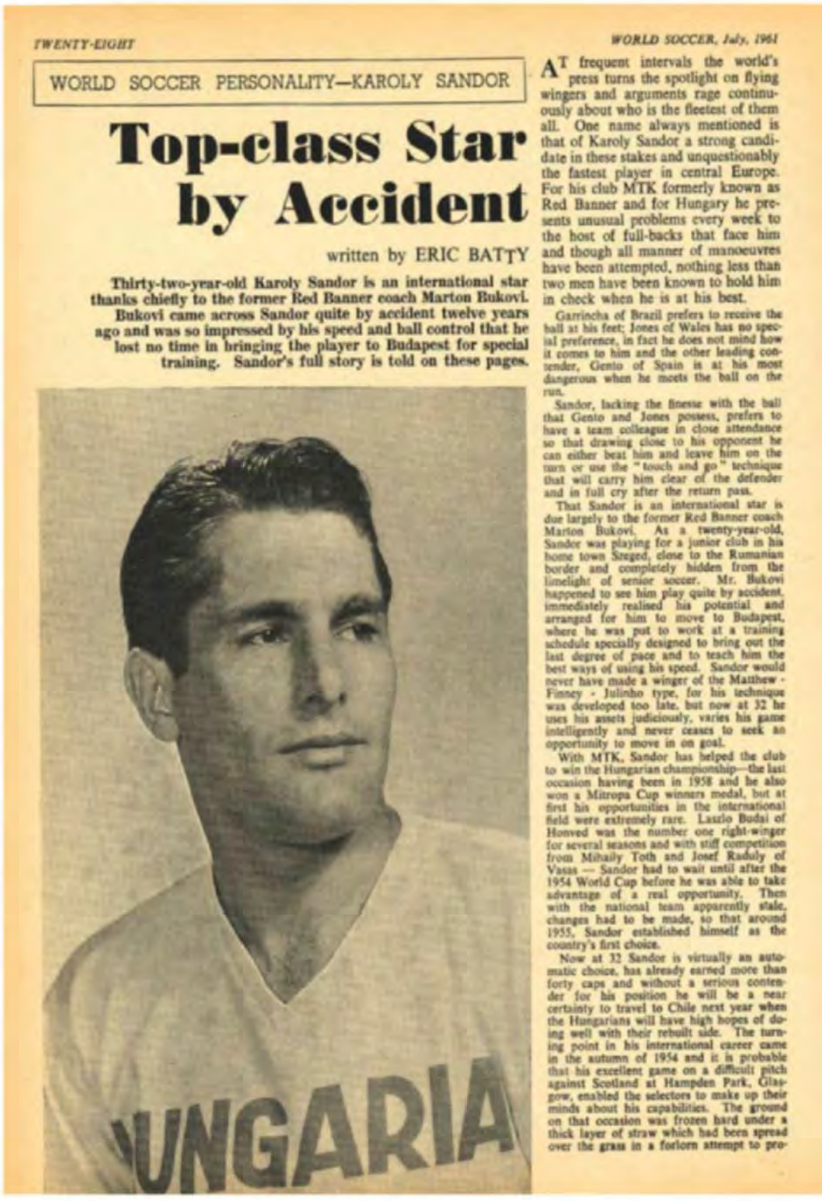
Batty went on to say how the winger might have moved to England after touring Britain with his club side in 1956, remarking: "During the many weeks of that tour, Sandor was plagued by offers to remain in England and it was strongly rumoured that he would sign for one of the English midland clubs. Had he stayed he would certainly have been given a stiff period of suspension by FIFA – the fate that befell several other stars who chose to remain in western Europe."

On that tour, Sandor and team-mate Nandor Hidegkuti terrorised club defences. "With Hidegkuti as his inside partner, Sandor was a splendid soccer riot," enthused Batty.

"Whenever Sandor moved to receive a pass, Hidegkuti took up a position a little behind him. Sandor pushed a short pass inside and then, head back and arms flailing, he was away like the wind.

"Hidegkuti's passes were perfectly laid, running smoothly ahead to be picked up at speed and when Sandor goes flat out there is not a defender in the game who can match him." WS

Profile... Karoly Sandor



TWENTY-EIGHT

WORLD SOCCER, July, 1961

WORLD SOCCER PERSONALITY—KAROLY SANDOR

Top-class Star by Accident

written by ERIC BATTY

Thirty-two-year-old Karoly Sandor is an international star thanks chiefly to the former Red Banner coach Marton Bukovi. Bukovi came across Sandor quite by accident twelve years ago and was so impressed by his speed and ball control that he lost no time in bringing the player to Budapest for special training. Sandor's full story is told on these pages.

AT frequent intervals the world's press turns the spotlight on flying wingers and arguments rage continuously about who is the fleetest of them all. One name always mentioned is that of Karoly Sandor a strong candidate in these stakes and unquestionably the fastest player in central Europe. For his club MTK formerly known as Red Banner and for Hungary he presents unusual problems every week to the host of full-backs that face him and though all manner of manoeuvres have been attempted, nothing less than two men have been known to hold him in check when he is at his best.

Garrincha of Brazil prefers to receive the ball at his feet; Jones of Wales has no special preference, in fact he does not mind how it comes to him and the other leading contender, Gento of Spain is at his most dangerous when he meets the ball on the run.

Sandor, lacking the finesse with the ball that Gento and Jones possess, prefers to have a team colleague in close attendance so that drawing close to his opponent he can either beat him and leave him on the turn or use the "touch and go" technique that will carry him clear of the defender and in full cry after the return pass.

That Sandor is an international star is due largely to the former Red Banner coach Marton Bukovi. As a twenty-year-old, Sandor was playing for a junior club in his home town Szeged, close to the Rumanian border and completely hidden from the limelight of senior soccer. Mr. Bukovi happened to see him play quite by accident, immediately realised his potential and arranged for him to move to Budapest, where he was put to work at a training schedule specially designed to bring out the last degree of pace and to teach him the best ways of using his speed. Sandor would never have made a winger of the Matthew - Finney - Julinho type, for his technique was developed too late, but now at 32 he uses his assets judiciously, varies his game intelligently and never ceases to seek an opportunity to move in on goal.

With MTK, Sandor has helped the club to win the Hungarian championship—the last occasion having been in 1958 and he also won a Mitropa Cup winners medal, but at first his opportunities in the international field were extremely rare. Laszlo Budai of Honved was the number one right-winger for several seasons and with stiff competition from Mihaly Toth and Josef Radoly of Vasas — Sandor had to wait until after the 1954 World Cup before he was able to take advantage of a real opportunity. Then with the national team apparently stale, changes had to be made, so that around 1955, Sandor established himself as the country's first choice.

Now at 32 Sandor is virtually an automatic choice, has already earned more than forty caps and without a serious contender for his position he will be a near certainty to travel to Chile next year when the Hungarians will have high hopes of doing well with their rebuilt side. The turning point in his international career came in the autumn of 1954 and it is probable that his excellent game on a difficult pitch against Scotland at Hampden Park, Glasgow, enabled the selectors to make up their minds about his capabilities. The ground on that occasion was frozen hard under a thick layer of straw which had been spread over the grass in a forlorn attempt to pro-

UNGARIA

> **"Sandor would never have made a winger of the Matthews-Finney-Julinho type for his technique was developed too late"**

WORLD SOCCER, July, 1961 — TWENTY-NINE

Karoly Sandor, full length on ground, scores Hungary's first goal against Holland in the recent international. Hungary won 3-0 and Sandor, whose story is outlined on these pages, was one of the most prominent stars. (P.A.I.)

tect it. When the straw was cleared shortly before the kick-off the worst Hungarian fears were realised for the ground was far more suitable for ice hockey than football. To run at all was to risk falling and suffering a serious injury, but with complete disregard for his safety Sandor never let up, scored a goal and had a fine game.

Two years' later Sandor returned to Britain with his club and after the domestic trouble of 1956 he was forced to stay away from Hungary until the position there became stabilised. During the many worrying weeks of that tour, Sandor was plagued by offers to remain in England and it was strongly rumoured that he would in fact sign for one of the English midland clubs. Certainly many teams would have been delighted to have him, but with his family in Hungary he was more or less obliged to return. Had he stayed he would certainly have been given a stiff period of suspension by FIFA — the fate that befell several other stars who chose to remain in Western Europe.

When Puskas, Kocsis and Czibor moved to Spain, the Hungarians were left with a team robbed of its inspiration and without the necessary time to rebuild before the 1958 World Cup, they had to rely on the senior players who had failed to make the grade. It was no surprise therefore when the Magyars did not perform as well in Sweden as they might have done, but one player to whom all opponents gave considerable attention to, was Sandor. Though they do not turn average teams into outstanding ones, wingers of Sandor's calibre can certainly help to win matches that an individual team's football does not justify. One slip, one lapse on the part of a defender and Sandor is away and likely to score.

Perhaps the best single game that Sandor ever played was for MTK during their 1956 tour. His opponent on this particular night is best left nameless to spare his blushes for he certainly received a first class run around. At one stage of the game he was racing along at Sandor's heels reaching out with both hands like a sleepwalker and vainly attempting to catch hold of the winger's shirt!

With Nandor Hidegkuti as his inside partner, Sandor was a splendid soccer riot. Hidegkuti knew better than most other players how to make the best use of Sandor's speed and on this particular occasion he played to him perfectly. Whenever Sandor moved to receive a pass, Hidegkuti took up position a little behind him and about ten yards inside. Sandor moved up to the back, pushed a short pass inside . . . and then head back and arms flailing he was away like the wind. Hidegkuti's through passes were perfectly laid, running smoothly ahead to be picked up at speed and when Sandor goes flat out there is not a defender in the game who can match him.

The only possible way to halt Sandor when he is at his best is to have someone move around behind the back. Then and only then by giving himself a vital five yards start can Sandor be stopped, but while two men cope with the winger the other nine are left to struggle against ten.

In addition to the general training undertaken by his colleagues, Sandor practises his own particular moves to seek perfection. His only assets of real note are three or four different feints, designed to unbalance an opponent and leave him incapable of turning before readjusting his balance — and sheer speed. For hour after hour he practises these feints all of them taught to fifteen-year-olds but polished to the nth degree from constant rehearsals.

Often of course a desperate opponent attempts to lay back from the winger, trying to anticipate the moment that he will make his break for the touchline, but fast though they back away Sandor can overtake them and then with a flick inside to a colleague he sweeps by them majestically. This of course is the oldest trick in the book and similar to the wall against which schoolboys hit a ball to pick up the rebound beyond their challenger. All so easy and simple, yet done properly at high speed so effective and decisive.

By now everyone recognises the menace that Sandor can be, yet though opponents are carefully briefed before they meet him few are ever successful to any marked standard. In a recent World Cup match against Holland he had one of his best games for some time and played a leading role in the 3-0 Hungarian victory — even scoring himself. His goal was especially notable because he so rarely heads the ball, yet in Rotterdam he raced in behind the Dutch defence to meet a high cross from outside-left Fenyvesi sending his header curling up into the top corner of the goal way out of Graafland's reach.

In appearance, Sandor is distinctive rather than distinguished. Quite often during matches he plays with his jersey outside his shorts a custom which has proved popular over the years with Hungarian players and he also frequently dispenses with skin guards. Perhaps in fact they only serve to hamper his movements for he certainly appears more comfortable with his socks hanging loosely around his ankles and though this may seem dangerous to some people, he seldom runs into trouble because opponents rarely succeed in coming close enough to him to inflict even an accidental injury.

One of the most outstanding goals in my memory was scored by Sandor while playing for Hungary in a match against Norway in Oslo in 1955. With Hungary winning comfortably by four goals to nil, they had taken off Kocsis, Bozsik and Puskas in order to blood one or two youngsters and the match seemed to have lost much of its former sparkle. Suddenly it sprang to life again as with Sandor in possession just inside his own half, Hidegkuti moved out to the touchline behind the left-back. The centre-half obligingly went with Hidegkuti who took a short pass from Sandor and promptly gave it back into the centre. With no less than six defenders closing in on the ball, Sandor raced through the middle pushed the ball some twenty yards ahead of him and ran. No one had a chance to cut him off before he could shoot and as the goalkeeper came out, Sandor slipped the ball past him into the net. As he scored, after running half the length of the pitch the entire Norwegian defence was spread out in a line behind him!

Also in this issue...

p14 & 24
Sedan turned up for the French Cup Final against Nimes with what Jerry Weinstein described as "the most dangerous mascot ever" in the form of a wild boar. Sedan won 3-1, which meant Nimes had been cup runners-up in two of the last three French Cups, not to mention three successive league campaigns.

p15
Kenneth Wolstenholme was just back from a short tour with England where he noticed a new ruthless streak emerging from manager Walter Winterbottom. "The team arrived three hours late in Portugal because of an aircraft delay and the first thing Winterbottom did was to have the lads out training at the exact time of kick-off, 4 o'clock, when the heat was so intense you could fry an egg on the pavement," he commented. "And as one player ran out carrying his shirt, he was immediately ordered to put it on – sunbathing was out."

p22-23
Ken Montgomery saw Scotland lose 9-3 to England and 4-0 to Czechoslovakia, and suggested that he had witnessed "28 days in which Scotland saw the last of its crumbling football traditions hammered to dishonourable dust."

p38-39
By beating Barcelona 3-2 in the Final, Benfica became the first non-Spanish team to win the European Cup, after Real Madrid had dominated in the first five seasons of the tournament.

10 years ago
Iraq win the AFC Asian Cup for the first time. They beat Saudi Arabia 1-0 in the Final in Jakarta with a goal from Younis Mahmoud, who ends the tournament as joint-top scorer and is voted Most Valuable Player.

20 years ago
Brian Kerr leads the Republic of Ireland to third place at the World Youth Championship in Malaysia. The Irish beat Ghana 2-1 in the third-place play-off, with Damien Duff scoring the winner. Argentina beat Uruguay by the same score in the Final.

30 years ago
After guiding Everton to their second league championship in three years, manager Howard Kendall quits Merseyside to start work as coach of Athletic Bilbao in Spain. Also leaving is Liverpool striker Ian Rush, who joins Juventus in Italy.

40 years ago
USSR win the first-ever World Youth Championship. Held in Tunisia, the Soviets beat Mexico 9-8 on penalties in the Final following a 2-2 draw after extra time, with Vladimir Bessonov scoring both of their goals.

50 years ago
Los Angeles, represented by English club Wolves, win the United Soccer Association title, beating Washington, represented by Aberdeen, in the Final. Sunderland, Shamrock Rovers and Cagliari also have teams in the tournament.

FOOTBALL KITS

TEL: 0845 8382442
EMAIL: SALES@SUBSIDE.CO.UK
WEB: SUBSIDE.CO.UK

facebook.com/subsidesports

twitter.com/subsidesports

THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO OFFICIAL WORLDWIDE FOOTBALL PRODUCTS

AFRICA CUP OF NATIONS 2017 OFFICIAL PRODUCT INSTOCK!

WE ONLY STOCK THE OFFICIAL PSPRO PLAYER SIZE PREMIER LEAGUE PRINTING FOR ADULT SHIRTS!

VISIT OUR WEBSITE: WWW.SUBSIDE.CO.UK

We pride ourselves in sourcing official replica, limited editions and exclusive products from around the globe.

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE AFRICAN NATIONS TEES

Gabon Logo Aubameyang T-Shirt - Yellow £18.99

Cameroon Home Shirt 2016 2017
£59.99 PUMA

Ghana Home Shirt 2016 2017
£59.99 PUMA

Ivory Coast Home Shirt 2016 2017
£59.99 PUMA

DR Congo Africa Nations Championship Winners Shirt
£54.99 O'Neills

1980's Mali Home Retro Shirt
£39.99 COPA

SUBSIDE SPORTS LTD: TEL: 0845 8382442 / EMAIL: SALES@SUBSIDE.CO.UK / WEB: SUBSIDE.CO.UK

PROGRAMMES

FREE

FOOTBALL PROGRAMMES

To receive a FREE programme plus a copy of our latest catalogue (listing several thousand different mint condition Big Match, League, Scottish, Irish, Foreign and Non-League teams programmes etc.) please send your name and address to:

STEVE EARL FOOTBALL PROGRAMMES (DEPT.WS)
BROAD STREET, BUNGAY, SUFFOLK, NR351AH, ENGLAND
or phone 01986 892621 or visit www.footballprogs.co.uk

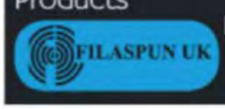
The 2017 F.A. CUP, Europa League & Champions League Finals £12 each (inc.p&p)

(Credit/Debit Cards & PayPal accepted)

MISCELLANEOUS

ADDING PRESTIGE TO YOUR IMAGE

Customised Ties, Embroidered Badges, Wooden Plaques, Scarves, Umbrellas, Metal Enamelware, Golf club badges & Blazers, Promotional Products



For more information call 01274 880072
email filaspun@btinternet.com
or visit www.filaspun.co.uk

MISCELLANEOUS

If Surgery is not your Option

We are here for you!

YOUR BIO ENERGY SUPPLY
MICROCURRENT

www.theNonSurgicalClinic.com

We use Technology that empower Carl Lewis to win 4 Olympic Gold Medals

To regenerate your Sports Injuries
In the shortest possible Time Frame
To get you back to the game

Call now : 07918528880

To book your Appointment

World Service

NOW INCORPORATING Global diary

Exclusive reports from our worldwide network of correspondents

74

NATHAN CARR
Caribbean Cup

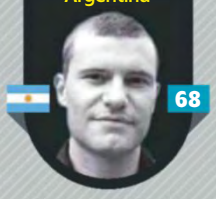
72

DARIUZ KUROWSKI
Euro Under-21 Championship

66

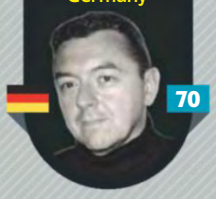
JOHN DUERDEN
Under-20 World Cup

JOEL RICHARDS
Argentina



68

NICK BIDWELL
Germany



70

PLUS

72

Euro champs... Germany under-21s

DIARY
70 Comprehensive global news

SQUADS
76 Confederations Cup

RESULTS, TABLES, FIXTURES
77 Internationals

76

Confed Cup...Cristiano Ronaldo (in red)

Under-20 World Cup

JOHN DUERDEN

England worthy winners

Paul Simpson's side look composed, clinical and classy in South Korea

On May 20, Venezuela beat Germany 2-0 in the competition's opening game, and on June 11 they lost 1-0 to England in the Final. In between, there was plenty to talk about as, despite plenty of early promise from African and Asian sides, all four semi-finalists came from Europe and South America.

Few would have been surprised if the Final had featured France and Uruguay after both reached the knockout stage with ease and without conceding a goal.

However, led by Paris Saint-Germain's Jean-Kevin Augustin, the star of the victorious European Under-19 Championship in 2016, France met Italy in the last 16 in a re-run of that tournament's Final, with the Italians gaining revenge. France's defence was finally breached by Riccardo Orsolini – the Juventus striker ended up top scorer with five goals in five separate games – and the young *Azzurri* won 2-1.

By then Germany, who had struggled to get going from the start, were already out, but the biggest surprise came with the first-round departure of Argentina, a team looking for a seventh tournament win.

Prior to the kick-off, Diego Maradona warned that this Argentinian side was not up to the standards of former champions, and a 3-0 loss to England on the opening day seemed to back up such sentiments. They also lost their second game, 2-1 to hosts South Korea, and despite a 5-0 thrashing of Guinea, they were eliminated.

South Korea raised hopes that they could repeat the seniors' heroics from the 2002 World Cup and preparations had been good – as were successive wins over Guinea and Argentina. But coach Shin Tae-yong rested his Barcelona stars Lee Seung-woo and Paik Seung-ho for the final group game with England and lost 1-0. That brought a second-round clash with Portugal, a poor start and an eventual 3-1 defeat. As a result, thousands of tickets bought for the expected quarter-final were cancelled.

Japan were the second Asian hopefuls and thanks to the impressive Ritsu Doan they reached the last 16 with a 2-2 draw against Italy. However, chances were missed against Venezuela and they crashed out.

Saudi Arabia also made the knockout stage but found Uruguay a little too strong and the South Americans cruised into the last eight where they overcame Portugal on penalties.

If Asian performances were ultimately disappointing, so were those of Africa. Guinea and South Africa fell early, while continental champions Senegal lost to Mexico in the second round.

More impressive were Zambia, who won their group and then managed a thrilling 4-3 extra-time victory over Germany in the last 16. The quarter-final with Italy was no less of an epic and they were within two minutes of making it to the last four against an Italian team that had been down to 10 men since the end of the first half. But Federico Dimarco then fired home an unstoppable free-kick to ensure extra-time, during which Luka Vido headed home to give Italy a 3-2 win.

Shock...Zambia celebrate against Germany

Oceania's excitement was provided by Vanuatu, who came from 2-0 down against Mexico to make it 2-2, with only a 94th-minute goal preventing an historic point. They also lost by the same 3-2 scoreline to Germany. New Zealand, meanwhile, made it to the second round but they were then thrashed 6-0 by the United States.

The Americans had recovered well from conceding twice against Ecuador in the first 10 minutes of their opening game. They came back to clinch a last-minute 3-3 draw thanks to two goals from 17-year-old striker Josh Sargent, who went on to score four and attract interest from Bundesliga clubs.

The US took top spot and made their way past the Kiwis to a quarter-final clash with Venezuela, and a tight game finished 2-1 to the South Americans.

That USA goal came after 117 minutes and was the first time the Venezuelan backline had been breached, with keeper Wuilker Farinez a standout between the sticks. Adalberto Penaranda and Sergio Cordova also impressed in attack.

They met a highly fancied Uruguay in the semi-finals and trailed until a last-minute free-kick led to an eventual penalty shoot-out victory to book a showdown against an England team that had looked assured, clinical and classy from the start.

England had gone behind after two minutes in their semi-final against Italy but Paul Simpson's side remained

FINAL

Jun 11, South Korea
(Suwon World Cup Stadium)
Venezuela 0
England 1 (Calvert-Lewin 35)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 30,346. **Ref:** Kuipers (Hol)
Venezuela: Farinez – R Hernandez, Ferraresi, Velasquez, J Hernandez – Cordova (Sosa 72), Lucena, Herrera, Penaranda (Hurtado 90+3) – Pena, Chacon (Soteldo 51). Coach: Dudamel
Yellow card: Velasquez
England: Woodman – Kenny, Clarke-Salter, Tomoki, Walker-Peters – Cook, Onomah, Dowell (Ojo 62) – Calvert-Lewin, Solanke, Lookman (Maitland-Niles 76). Manager: Simpson
Yellow cards: Dowell, Tomoki

Upset...South Korea (in red) beat Argentina

Solid...England's Jonjoe Kenny (left) and Josh Onomah keep Adalberto Penaranda of Venezuela at bay

composed and blew the opposition away with a fine second-half display. Dominic Solanke, who was named the tournament's MVP, scored twice, with Ademola Lookman, one of five Everton players in the squad, getting the other in a 3-1 win.

In the Final in Suwon, Dominic Calvert-Lewin, another of the Everton quintet, struck in the first half. After the break, Freddie Woodman saved a penalty as England hung on to win 1-0. It was a Final that could have gone either way but overall the winners were worthy champions, while Venezuela did their country, convulsed by political instability at home, proud.

The success of the Video Assistant Review, was more debatable. When it worked, and overturned blatantly wrong decisions, it worked very well. When it didn't, it just added to the confusion, wasted time, and reduced drama and excitement.

The ABBA system of penalties, which seeks to reduce the statistical advantage of the team that goes first, also seemed to rob the shoot-out of drama.

Fortunately there was plenty of excitement elsewhere. WS

ENGLAND SQUAD

GOALKEEPERS: Dean Henderson (Manchester United), Luke Southwood (Reading), Freddie Woodman (Newcastle United).
DEFENDERS: Jake Clarke-Salter (Chelsea), Callum Connolly (Everton), Dael Fry (Middlesbrough), Jonjoe Kenny (Everton), Ezri Konsa (Charlton Athletic), Fikayo Tomori (Chelsea), Kyle Walker-Peters (Tottenham Hotspur).
MIDFIELDERS: Lewis Cook (Bournemouth), Kieran Dowell (Everton), Ovie Ejaria (Liverpool), Ainsley Maitland-Niles (Arsenal), Sheyi Ojo (Liverpool), Josh Onomah (Tottenham Hotspur).
FORWARDS: Adam Armstrong (Newcastle United), Dominic Calvert-Lewin (Everton), Harrison Chapman (Middlesbrough), Ademola Lookman (Everton), Dominic Solanke (Chelsea).
MANAGER: Paul Simpson

Dramatic... Luca Vido (in blue) heads Italy's winner against Zambia

Argentina

JOEL RICHARDS

Boca's triumph lacks sparkle

Bombonera celebrates title success but the season has few high points

With the most wins and the most goals, the fewest defeats and the second-tightest defence in the country, Boca Juniors were crowned champions for a 32nd time. Yet for a club with such a successful history, imbued with rich folklore and popular culture, and a long list of world-class players who either grew up with or played for the club, this was not a vintage side.

As far as the local media were concerned, the 2016–17 Primera Division – called the Torneo de la Independencia in commemoration of the 200th anniversary of the country's independence – was a lacklustre campaign that produced

Disappointed...River keeper Augusto Batalla (left) and Leonardo Ponzio

Champions... Boca Juniors

a lacklustre champion. Boca Juniors' coach, Guillermo Barros Schelotto, may have won 16 titles with the club during his playing days as a winger, but he still has much work to do to emulate the success he was part of in the 2000s.

At the start of the season, domestic success was the very least expected by the fans of a club that boasts the league's largest wage and transfer budget but had failed to qualify for continental competition. And with Carlos Tevez in attack and a strong support cast, Boca were title favourites.

However, an early three-match suspension for Tevez forced Barros Schelotto to reconsider his game plan, and the season also ended without the star striker, who had caved into the lure of the Chinese league. In his place, after a slow start following his move from Mexican club America, Dario Benedetto was the hero of the Bombonera. With 21 goals he was the league's top scorer – the first Boca player to do so since Martin Palermo a decade ago.

Benedetto picked off weaker teams while the injury-permitting intermittent contributions from Fernando Gago in midfield unlocked games, as did Ricardo Centurion's pace and skill. Despite his role in the title win, Boca are not expected to sign Centurion on a permanent basis. He is on loan from Sao Paulo and the price tag of over $6million is a stumbling block – as is the unwanted attention off the pitch, with accusations of domestic abuse filed against the player.

Able to tweak his side over the course of the 30-game season – which ran parallel to the European season, unlike the old short tournaments – Barros Schelotto's focus is now on the Libertadores and equalling Independiente's record seven wins.

Championship celebrations at the Bombonera never go down well with River Plate followers, and things were even worse this season as they became embroiled in a major doping scandal.

Contrary to early reports that several players had tested positive for a banned substance, only defender Lucas Martinez Quarta and versatile midfielder Camilo Mayada were confirmed cases. But while the club's medical staff claimed the results were due to a contaminated batch of approved medicine, the radio presenter hosting Boca's title party was forced to apologise after telling fans: "Whoever doesn't jump got high!"

River were just one of the teams who fell by the wayside in the title fight. Talented 21-year-old goalkeeper Augusto Batalla, who was close to joining Real Madrid while captain of the national under-20 side, had a season to forget and conceded goals through misjudgement more than once.

There was the distraction of the Libertadores Cup for River Plate, as there was for Estudiantes, who put together a strong run early in the season. After 10 games they were undefeated and had won eight times. However, their quest for the league spectacularly derailed against Boca in a game that saw their coach Nelson Vivas earn comparisons to Bruce Banner, the

Hulk...Estudiantes' coach Nelson Vivas

Challenge...Banfield's Brian Sarmiento (left) and Horacio Pinola of Rosario Central

Barros Schelotto's focus is now on the Libertadores and equalling Independiente's record seven wins

Incredible Hulk. Sent off for protesting at not being awarded what appeared to be a clear penalty for his team, former international defender Vivas not only left the bench he also left his shirt behind, ripping it off dramatically and storming down the tunnel with his back tattoo on display.

Less dramatic was Banfield's rise under coach Julio Falcioni, who has previously won the league title with Banfield and at Boca. After steadily rising up the table, Falcioni's side were unable to run the title race down to the last game. Finishing in fifth place, Banfield did manage to qualify for the Libertadores Cup, along with runners-up River, third-place Estudiantes and Racing, who were fourth. Independiente's strong campaign fell just short and made the Sudamericana Cup, along with San Lorenzo, Lanus, Newell's Old Boys, Defensa y Justicia and Colon.

Some 29 positions below Boca Juniors were Aldosivi. Based in the seaside resort of Mar del Plata, they won just five games all season and were relegated with Quilmes, Atletico Rafaela and Sarmiento.

Next season brings a new start for the league, with the inauguration of the Superliga. The number of teams competing will drop to 28, after which it will be reduced again for the following campaign.

The official line is that the new format will be a springboard for the league to improve. But how swiftly an improvement in resources for clubs produces an improvement in quality of football on show remains to be seen. WS

Review

BEST OF THE SEASON

PLAYER OF THE SEASON
Dario Benedetto (Boca Juniors)
Supporters and directors alike hope the club hold onto the league's top scorer for the forthcoming Libertadores Cup campaign.

COACH OF THE SEASON
Guillermo Barros Schelotto (Boca Juniors)
The 44-year-old managed the loss of Carlos Tevez and off-the-field distractions to win his second trophy as coach.

NEWCOMER OF THE SEASON
Sebastian Driussi (River Plate)
The versatile former Argentina under-17 striker is now 21 and his 17 goals earned a €15m move to Russia with Zenit.

JUNE 7-JULY 4, 2017

Global diary

A comprehensive record of recent events around the world

Wednesday June 7

ALGERIA: ES Setif win 3-0 away to bottom-placed MO Bejaia to wrap up the Premier League title with two games to spare.
COLOMBIA: Radamel Falcao becomes the country's top scorer as his goal in a 2-2 draw with Spain takes his international tally to 26.
PORTUGAL: *Forbes* magazine says Cristiano Ronaldo is the world's best-paid athlete, with earnings of $93m up to June 1, 2017.

Thursday June 8

ENGLAND: Manchester City agree to pay Benfica £35m for Ederson, who becomes the second-most expensive keeper of all time. Craig Shakespeare, caretaker manager of Leicester City since February, is given a permanent, three-year deal.
ITALY: Benevento, who finished fifth in Serie B, beat Carpi 1-0 in the play-offs and will play in Serie A next season for the first time in their 88-year history.
VENEZUELA: Victory over Uruguay on penalties in the Under-20 World Cup sees Venezuela reach the Final of a FIFA tournament for the first time in their history.

Friday June 9

ANDORRA: A 1-0 victory over Hungary is only Andorra's second win in 101 qualifying matches and ends a wait of 66 games for a competitive three points.
HOLLAND: Wesley Sneijder plays his 131st international and celebrates becoming Holland's most capped player of all time with a goal in a 5-0 victory over Luxembourg.
PORTUGAL: Cristiano Ronaldo's two goals in Portugal's 3-0 win in Latvia make him the third-highest international scorer of all-time in Europe with 73. He is now behind only Ferenc Puskas (84) and Sandor Kocsis (75).
SAUDI ARABIA: The Saudi Arabian Football Federation apologises after the national team elects not to take part in a minute's silence before Thursday's game against Australia in Adelaide for victims of a terrorist attack in London.
SOUTH KOREA: Jeju United's Cho Yong-hyung is suspended for six months for pushing the referee after being sent off against Urawa Red Diamonds in May. Team-mate Baek Dong-kyu, who was an unused sub, is banned for three months for elbowing Urawa captain Yuki Abe in the face as the AFC Champions League game ended in a mass brawl.

Saturday June 10

ENGLAND: Captaining his country for the first time, Harry Kane scores an injury-time equaliser as England draw 2-2 away to Scotland.
GERMANY: Sandro Wagner scores a hat-trick on his competitive debut as Germany thrash San Marino 7-0.
MONTENEGRO: Steven Jovetic scores Montenegro's first hat-trick since independence in a 4-1 win against Armenia.

Sunday June 11

ENGLAND: Dominic Calvert-Lewin scores the only goal of the game as England beat Venezuela 1-0 in the Final of the Under-20 World Cup.
SENEGAL: Generation Foot become the third team in three years to win the Senegalese championship the year after promotion, following in the footsteps of Douanes and Goree.
SPAIN: A 2-1 victory in Macedonia extends Spain's unbeaten record in World Cup qualifying to 59 games, stretching back to March 1993.

Monday June 12

IRAN: A 2-0 victory at home to Uzbekistan sees Iran secure their place at next year's World Cup.
SPAIN: Athletic Bilbao's Yeray, who was diagnosed with testicular cancer in December and had a tumour removed, will require chemotherapy after an anomaly is found during a medical examination. The 22-year-old centre-back is expected to be sidelined for three months.

Tuesday June 13

AUSTRALIA: Skipper Mile Jedinak withdraws from the Confederations Cup squad due to injury.
BRAZIL: Diego Souza's goal after 11 seconds against Australia – as Brazil go on to win 4-0 – is the

Shock...Andorra's Max Llovera (left) and Moises San Nicolas get the better of Hungary forward Roland Sallai

Treble...Sandro Wagner

fastest in the national team's history.
CANADA: Alphonso Davies plays in a 2-1 win over Curacao to become Canada's youngest international at 16 years and 223 days.
ITALY: After five seasons in charge of Sassuolo, Eusebio Di Francesco is confirmed as the new coach of Roma, following Luciano Spalletti's departure for Internazionale.

Wednesday June 14

CHINA: Sven Goran Eriksson is sacked as coach of Shenzhen after just six months in charge of the Chinese second-tier side.
ENGLAND: Southampton sack manager Claude Puel after less than a year in charge.
GERMANY: Bayern Munich sign Lyon midfielder Corentin Tolisso for a Bundesliga record fee of €41.5m, which could rise to €47.5m.

Thursday June 15

FRANCE: After the French Football Federation waive a rule banning ➤

Quick...Diego Souza puts Brazil ahead

Germany

NICK BIDWELL

Mixed reaction to Chinese deal

China under-20 side to play in German fourth tier

In a contentious development, the south-western section of the Regionalliga, the fourth tier of the German pyramid, may soon have a distinctly exotic flavour. Plans are afoot to induct the Chinese under-20 side into the competition, and next season they could be going head-to-head with teams such as Saarbrucken, Ulm and the second-strings of Hoffenheim, Mainz and Freiburg.

The idea stems from a football-partnership pact concluded a few months ago by the Chinese and German governments, a five-year agreement of mutual benefit, with the Deutschland federation offering its substantial soccer know-how to the Asian powerhouse and the German game gaining privileged access to the huge Chinese market.

Seeing this European adventure as a way of broadening their sporting horizons and preparing for the 2020 Olympic Games, the Chinese under-20s will basically play 38 exhibition games. The results will not count towards the league table and all their fixtures will be played at opponents' grounds, with the Chinese FA promising to stump up a €15,000 facility fee.

The DFB and Sudwest-Liga claim that all the clubs in the division have reacted positively but, in truth, the reception has been mixed.

Stuttgarter Kickers' commercial director Marc-Nicolai said: "It's an outstanding idea. We think it's interesting in both a sporting and business sense. The key for us is to have new markets. We look forward to hosting two games and we'll roll out the red carpet for the Chinese." However, Waldhof Mannheim, one of the best teams in that league, want no part of it.

"As soon as we were contacted about this, we made our concerns known and asked for clarifications; we haven't given written consent," explained chief executive Markus Kompp. "Despite the marketing spin-offs, we must not completely lose our local connection."

Excited...China

You have to feel sorry for the FK Pirmasens club. The best-placed of the six sides relegated from the Sudwest last season, they had a motion rejected to increase the numbers in that division from 19 to 20. Now the Chinese under-20s have been admitted instead.

"We have to accept it, but for me it's pure capitalism," claimed managing director Christophe Radtke. "Rather than hold onto us, they chose a money source from China."

A final decision on the matter will be taken at a meeting on July 11. WS

Fourth tier...SV Drochtersen (in red) and Egestorf

➤ clubs from hiring coaches who are aged over 65, Nantes appoint Claudio Ranieri.
SOUTH KOREA: Uli Stielike is sacked as coach two days after a 3-2 loss to Qatar left South Korea's hopes of qualifying for the World Cup in the balance.
UGANDA: Kampala City Council Authority complete the domestic double, beating second-tier Paidha Black Angels 2-0 in the cup Final.

Friday June 16

POLAND: Defending champions Sweden miss a penalty and draw 0-0 with England in the opening game of the European Under-21s.

Saturday June 17

ITALY: Parma claim promotion for a second successive season after being demoted from Serie A for going bankrupt, moving up to Serie B with a 2-0 win over Alessandria.
RUSSIA: The hosts kick off the Confederations Cup with a 2-0 victory over New Zealand.

Sunday June 18

COLOMBIA: Atletico Nacional thrash Deportivo Cali 5-1 to overturn a 2-0 deficit from the away leg to win the Apertura Final.

Monday June 19

SPAIN: Florentino Perez is re-elected unopposed as Real Madrid president for the next four years.

Tuesday June 20

ARGENTINA: Banfield's 1-0 loss to San Lorenzo sees Boca Juniors crowned champions of Argentina for a 32nd time.

Wednesday June 21

RUSSIA: Igor Akinfeev wins his 100th cap as Russia lose 1-0 to Portugal in the Confederations Cup.

Thursday June 22

CHILE: Alexis Sanchez becomes Chile's all-time leading scorer, getting his 38th international goal in a 1-1 draw with Germany.
CHINA: Brazilian midfielder Oscar is banned for eight games for sparking a mass brawl while playing for Shanghai SIPG by deliberately kicking the ball at two players from Guangzhou R&F during a 1-1 draw on Sunday.

Friday June 23

ENGLAND: Mauricio Pellegrino is named manager of Southampton.
RUSSIA: Third-tier Sochi, who are due to move into the city's World Cup stadium after next year's ➤

Euro Under-21s

DARIUSZ KUROWSKI

Germany second-string win title

Depleted squad crowned European champions

With its new 12-team format, the 2017 European Under-21 Championship in Poland meant just two days rest between games for the players, with the finalists having to play five matches in less than two weeks.

"I think the formula is exciting for neutrals, but of course it's not a good thing for coaches," was the opinion of England manager Aidy Boothroyd, whose team were beaten on penalties in the semi-finals by Germany after a 2-2 draw.

The tournament had started with much of the attention focused on the high-quality football of Spain, whose 3-1 victory over Portugal in the group stage was a real feast for fans at Gdynia stadium.

Displaying impressive technical finesse, the Spaniards won all of the tournament's individual prizes, with Real Betis' Dani Ceballos named the best player, Saul Niguez of Atletico Madrid winning the Golden Boot as top scorer with five goals, and Marco Asensio from Real Madrid taking the Silver Boot as the second-top scorer, with three goals and one assist.

Spain reached the Final with a 3-1 victory over Italy, which took their unbeaten run to 13 games, but that sequence came to an end against Germany. It was a painful lesson that even fantastic individual skill is not always enough for victory because football is a team game.

Strong and able... Germany celebrate

"We knew that Spain had a lot of quality players, but we had our team spirit," declared Germany full-back Yannick Gerhardt. "Especially in the first half we fought for each other.

"If somebody lost the ball, another one supported him at once."

Germany won the Final thanks to a first-half header from Mitchell Weiser, but even after they had gone ahead they still continued to press rather than just sitting back and defending the result.

In the group stage Germany had lost 1-0 to Italy in a controversial game that saw both teams progress to the semis: Italy as group winners and Germany as the best second-placed team. During the final few minutes both sides were happy to see out

England miss...Germany's Julian Pollersbeck saves Nathan Redmond's spot kick

the game as the result suited both parties.

When Italy coach Luigi Di Biagio was questioned afterwards about possible collusion between the teams he answered: "If in 88th or 89th minute you play a ball back, I don't see anything wrong.

"Earlier we tried to score the second goal, so I don't know what we are talking about?"

> **"The formula is exciting for neutrals, but of course it's not a good thing for coaches"**
>
> England boss Aidy Boothroyd

But that was not a good enough explanation for Slovakian prime minister Robert Fico, because Italy progressed at the expense of his country. He wrote an open letter to UEFA president Aleksander Ceferin, describing the game as a "farce", having "no respect for sportsmen" and comparing it to the 1982 World Cup draw between Germany and Austria, which ended

Golden Boot...Spain's Saul Niguez

Algeria's dream of reaching the knock-out stage.

Overall victory for Germany was all the more impressive as coach Stefan Kuntz was without eight key players who were called up for the Confederations Cup in Russia. However, the tournament was a real disaster for the host nation as expectations among Polish fans and media turned out to be totally unrealistic.

A day before the opening game, midfielder Radoslaw Murawski declared that he "believes in a gold medal". But after losing 2-1 to Slovakia, centre-back Krystian Bielik said: "Our training sessions are boring. And we play, as we train." He apologised to coach Marcin Dorna but did not play again. His harsh opinion seemed to be an accurate comment on the hosts' performances. They finished bottom of their group after another 3-0 defeat to England and a 2-2 draw with Sweden, the defending champions.

At least the hosts were praised by UEFA for the tournament organisation and the fans' enthusiasm. The 21 games were watched by 244,085 people, at an average of 11,623 per game. WS

Caribbean Cup

NATHAN CARR

Curacao make history

Former Dutch colony win tournament for first time

"We are like a family," says Curacao boss Remko Bicentini, who has a huge smile etched across his face after his team beat defending champions Jamaica 2-1 in June's Caribbean Cup Final. And it was this sense of unity – combined with coaching continuity, astute player recruitment and the development of a clear identity on the pitch – that culminated in the Dutch-speaking island's maiden title.

The foundations had been set by former Ajax and Barcelona star Patrick Kluivert, who was installed as national coach in early 2015 before leaving his post last summer to become director of football at Paris Saint-Germain. His assistant, Bicentini, took over and this year ensured Curacao's ascent to the pinnacle of Caribbean football with victories over Martinique and Jamaica.

With a core group of Dutch-born players who decided to represent the island of their family heritage – such as goalkeeper Eloy Room, captain Cuco Martina, midfielder Leandro Bacuna and striker Rangelo Janga – Curacao had shown throughout the qualifying campaign that they were a quality side capable of causing an upset at the Caribbean Cup.

Things didn't quite go to plan to begin with in their semi-final against hosts Martinique, however, as they went a goal down in the first half. But two goals after the break put Curacao in their first-ever Final, where they deservedly ran out winners thanks to a brace from Elson Hooi.

Almost two years on from their historic run to the Gold Cup Final, Jamaica were disappointing.

There have been a number of changes since their exploits in 2015, with 1998 World Cup midfielder Theodore Whitmore taking charge for a fourth time and assembling a new group of players from the National Premier League and the US.

No British-born Jamaican players were called up for this competition – or July's Gold Cup in the USA – meaning the likes of Wes Morgan, Adrian Mariappa, Michael Hector, Garath McCleary, Jobi McAnuff and Giles Barnes missed out, although Morgan and Mariappa were apparently injured and Hector made himself unavailable for the Caribbean Cup.

Starting games slowly was an obvious weakness of the Reggae Boyz and it took half an hour for Jermaine Johnson to register Jamaica's first shot on target against French Guiana in their semi-final, while they conceded within the first 10 minutes of the Final, which put them on the back foot almost immediately. They fought back to equalise at the end through defender Rosario Harriott but then switched off seconds later as Curacao regained the lead almost straight from the kick-off.

French Guiana gave a solid account of themselves by running Jamaica close and seeing off the hosts in the third-place play-off. Their squad was boosted by three new additions: Thomas Issorat, Shaquille Dutard and ex-Chelsea midfielder Florent Malouda, who was given the all-clear by the French Football Federation to represent his country of birth. Now 37, Malouda pulled the strings from midfield with moments of individual brilliance that mesmerised the crowd. However, his team-mates eased off against Jamaica and should have

Victors...Curacao

Remko Bicentini ensured Curacao's ascent to the pinnacle of Caribbean football with victories over Martinique and Jamaica

Foundations...former national coach Patrick Kluivert

Winner... Rangelo Janga

won by a more convincing margin than their 1-0 scoreline against Martinique based on their second-half performance.

Expectations had been relatively high for Martinique following an impressive qualifying run – they won 17-2 on aggregate across their six qualifiers, including a 2-0 win over Trinidad & Tobago after extra time – and the fact that they were playing on home turf provided extra optimism. But they turned in two below-par performances which resulted in last place, much to the frustration of the French-speaking island's fans.

They took the lead against Curacao but conceded two sloppy goals: an obvious penalty and then a lack of marking for Janga's headed winner. Although they improved in what was a scrappy third-place play-off, creating more opportunities in the final third, they lacked the cutting edge which French Guiana had in the form of goalscorer Sloan Privat.

Jean-Sylvain Babin was missed in central defence for the hosts, as was former Real Madrid man Julien Faubert. Both were withheld by their clubs, and with Martinique not affiliated to FIFA there was no obligation to release them. This has also affected their Gold Cup squad, with a noticeable lack of professional players from France. WS

➤ tournament, announce they are withdrawing from the league.

SCOTLAND: Celtic confirm no tickets will be available to their fans for the away leg of the Champions League qualifier in Belfast should Linfield beat La Fiorita of San Marino in the previous round.

Saturday June 24

PORTUGAL: With his appearance in a 4-0 Confederations Cup victory over New Zealand, Joao Moutinho becomes only the fifth player to win 100 caps for Portugal.

SOUTH AFRICA: SuperSport United beat Orlando Pirates 4-1 to retain the South African Cup.

SPAIN: Getafe beat Tenerife 3-1 to complete a 3-2 aggregate victory and secure their return to La Liga next season.

Sunday June 25

AUSTRALIA: Tim Cahill becomes the first outfield player to win 100 caps for Australia as they draw 1-1 with Chile.

BOLIVIA: Bolivar win 2-0 away to Club Universitario to wrap up the apertura championship.

CURACAO: A 2-1 victory over Jamaica in Martinique sees Curacao win the Caribbean Cup for the first time in their history.

FRANCE: Mario Balotelli signs a new contract to remain at Nice, although the length of the deal is undisclosed.

Monday June 26

ENGLAND: Crystal Palace appoint Frank De Boer as manager.

Tuesday June 27

ARMENIA: Just 24 days after Real Madrid lifted the trophy in Cardiff, Armenia's Alashkert beat FC Santa Coloma of Andorra 1-0 with a goal from Uros Nenadovich in the first qualifying round of this season's Champions League.

CANADA: Sebastian Giovinco gets both goals, including a 95th-minute winner, as Toronto beat Montreal Impact 2-1 to retain the Canadian Championship 3-2 on aggregate.

ITALY: The Della Valle family say they will listen to "concrete offers" to sell Fiorentina.

USA: Eden Hazard, Yohan Cabaye and Demba Ba are among the investors in a new San Diego-based side that will compete in the NASL next season.

Wednesday June 28

ENGLAND: Former South Yorkshire Police chief superintendent David Duckenfield is one of six people charged with criminal offences in relation to the 1989 FA Cup semi-final at Hillsborough in which 96 Liverpool supporters died.

Thursday June 29

BRAZIL: Coritiba captain Kleber is given a 15-game ban for spitting at and striking Bahia defender Edson.

FRANCE: Montpellier president Louis Nicollin dies, reportedly from a heart attack while celebrating his 74th birthday at a restaurant.

USA: Bastian Schweinsteiger scores in the shoot-out, but Chicago Fire are knocked out of the US Open Cup by Cincinnati from the third-tier USL following a 0-0 draw.

Friday June 30

GERMANY: Mitchell Weiser's goal gives Germany a 1-0 win against Spain in the European Under-21 Championship Final in Poland.

HOLLAND: Utrecht defender Ramon Leeuwin is taken to hospital after being struck by a motorbike on leaving the club's training ground. The rider was pursued by players and fans, before being handed over to police.

Saturday July 1

ENGLAND: Steve Claridge, boss of non-league Weymouth, comes out of retirement at the age of 51 to play in a friendly against one of his former clubs, Portsmouth.

Sunday July 2

GERMANY: A 1-0 win against Chile gives world champions Germany a first Confederations Cup title.

VENEZUELA: Mongas lose 2-1 at Caracas but draw the Apertura Final 2-2 and win on away goals.

Monday July 3

FRANCE: Timothy Weah, the 17-year-old son of former Ballon d'Or-winner George Weah, signs a three-year contract with his dad's former club Paris Saint-Germain.

SPAIN: Las Palmas appoint Manolo Marquez as coach to replace Quique Setien, who left to take charge of Real Betis.

Tuesday July 4

BRAZIL: Rogerio Ceni, who scored 131 goals for Sao Paulo even though he played in goal, leaves after just seven months as coach following a 2-0 loss at Flamengo on Sunday that made it six league games without a win. Seven months after taking charge of tragedy-hit Chapecoense, Vagner Mancini departs with the side three points clear of the relegation zone. WS

CONFEDERATIONS CUP SQUADS

AUSTRALIA

GOALKEEPERS

12 Mitchell **LANGERAK** (28) 22.08.88 Stuttgart (Ger)
1 Mathew **RYAN** (25) 08.04.92 Genk (Blg)
18 Danny **VUKOVIC** (32) 27.03.85 Sydney

DEFENDERS

16 Aziz **BEHICH** (26) 16.12.90 Bursaspor (Tur)
2 Milos **DEGENEK** (23) 28.04.94 Yokohama (Jap)
3 Alex **GERSBACH** (20) 08.05.97 Rosenborg (Nor)
6 Dylan **McGOWAN** (25) 06.08.91 Adelaide United
19 Ryan **McGOWAN** (27) 15.08.89 Guizhou (Chn)
20 Trent **SAINSBURY** (25) 05.01.92 Inter (Ita)
8 Bailey **WRIGHT** (24) 28.07.92 Bristol City (Eng)

MIDFIELDERS

17 Ajdin **HRUSTIC** (20) 05.07.96 Groningen (Hol)
22 Jackson **IRVINE** (24) 07.03.93 Burton Alb (Eng)
15 James **JEGGO** (25) 12.02.92 Sturm Graz (Aut)
21 Massimo **LUONGO** (24) 25.09.92 QPR (Eng)
5 Mark **MILLIGAN** (31) 04.08.85 Baniyas (UAE)
13 Aaron **MOOY** (26) 15.09.90 Man City (Eng)

FORWARDS

4 Tim **CAHILL** (37) 06.12.79 Melbourne City
9 Tomi **JURIC** (25) 22.07.91 Lucerne (Swi)
10 Robbie **KRUSE** (28) 05.10.88 unattached
7 Mathew **LECKIE** (26) 04.02.91 Ingolstadt (Ger)
11 Jamie **MACLAREN** (23) 29.07.93 Brisbane Roar
23 Tom **ROGIC** (24) 16.12.92 Celtic (Sco)
14 James **TROISI** (28) 03.07.88 unattached

COACH

Ange **POSTECOGLOU** (51) 27.08.65

CAMEROON

GOALKEEPERS

23 Georges **BOKWE** (27) 14.07.89 Mjondalen (Nor)
16 Andre **ONANA** (21) 02.04.96 Ajax (Hol)
1 Fabrice **ONDOA** (21) 24.12.95 Sevilla (Spa)

DEFENDERS

19 Collins **FAI** (24) 13.08.92 St'd Liege (Blg)
12 Jerome **GUIHOATA** (22) 07.10.94 Panionios (Gre)
2 Ernest **MABOUKA** (29) 16.06.88 Zilina (Slk)
5 Michael **NGADEU-NGADJUI** (26) 23.11.90 Slavia (CzR)
22 Jonathan **NGWEM** (25) 20.07.91 Progresso (Ang)
21 Lucien **OWONA** (26) 09.08.90 Alcorcon (Spa)
6 Ambroise **OYONGO** (25) 22.06.91 Montreal (USA)
4 Adolphe **TEIKEU** (26) 23.06.90 Sochaux (Fra)

MIDFIELDERS

17 Arnaud **DJOUM** (28) 02.05.89 Hearts (Sco)
14 Georges **MANDJECK** (28) 09.12.88 Metz (Fra)
15 Sebastien **SIANI** (30) 21.12.86 Oostende (Blg)
3 Andre-Frank **ZAMBO ANGUISSA** (21) 16.11.95 Marseille (Fra)

FORWARDS

10 Vincent **ABOUBAKAR** (25) 22.01.92 Besiktas (Tur)
13 Christian **BASSOGOG** (21) 18.10.95 Henan J (Chn)
11 Olivier **BOUMAL** (27) 17.09.89 Panathinaikos (Gre)
8 Benjamin **MOUKANDJO** (28) 12.11.88 Lorient (Fra)
7 Moumi **NGAMALEU** (22) 09.07.94 Altach (Aut)
18 Robert Ndip **TAMBE** (23) 22.02.94 Sp Trnava (Slk)
20 Karl **TOKO EKAMBI** (24) 14.09.92 Angers (Fra)
9 Jacques **ZOUA** (25) 06.09.91 Kaiserslautern (Ger)

COACH

Hugo **BROOS** (Blg) (65) 10.04.52

CHILE

GOALKEEPERS

1 Claudio **BRAVO** (34) 13.04.83 Man City (Eng)
23 Johnny **HERRERA** (36) 09.05.81 Univ de Chile
12 Cristopher **TOSELLI** (29) 15.06.88 Univ Catolica

DEFENDERS

15 Jean **BEAUSEJOUR** (33) 01.06.84 Univ de Chile
13 Paulo **DIAZ** (22) 25.08.94 San Lorenzo (Arg)
4 Mauricio **ISLA** (29) 12.06.88 Cagliari (Ita)
18 Gonzalo **JARA** (31) 29.08.85 Univ de Chile
17 Gary **MEDEL** (29) 03.08.87 Inter (Ita)
2 Eugenio **MENA** (28) 18.07.88 Sport Recife (Bra)
3 Enzo **ROCO** (24) 16.08.92 Cruz Azul (Mex)

MIDFIELDERS

20 Charles **ARANGUIZ** (28) 17.04.89 B L'kusen (Ger)
21 Marcelo **DIAZ** (30) 30.12.86 Celta Vigo (Spa)
6 Jose Pedro **FUENZALIDA** (32) 22.02.85 U Catolica
14 Felipe **GUTIERREZ** (26) 08.10.90 Internacional (Bra)
10 Pablo **HERNANDEZ** (30) 24.10.86 Celta Vigo (Spa)
5 Francisco **SILVA** (31) 11.02.86 Cruz Azul (Mex)
8 Arturo **VIDAL** (30) 22.05.87 Bayern M (Ger)

FORWARDS

22 Edson **PUCH** (31) 09.04.86 Necaxa (Mex)
16 Martin **RODRIGUEZ** (22) 05.08.94 Cruz Azul (Mex)
9 Angelo **SAGAL** (24) 18.04.93 Huachipato
7 Alexis **SANCHEZ** (28) 19.12.88 Arsenal (Eng)
19 Leonardo **VALENCIA** (26) 25.04.91 Palestino
11 Eduardo **VARGAS** (27) 20.11.89 Tigres (Mex)

COACH

Juan Antonio **PIZZI** (Spa) (49) 07.06.68

GERMANY

GOALKEEPERS

12 Bernd **LENO** (25) 04.03.92 Leverkusen
22 Marc-Andre **TER STEGEN** (25) 30.04.92 Barcelona (Spa)
1 Kevin **TRAPP** (26) 08.07.90 PSG (Fra)

DEFENDERS

4 Matthias **GINTER** (23) 19.01.94 B Dortmund
3 Jonas **HECTOR** (27) 27.05.90 Cologne
6 Benjamin **HENRICHS** (20) 23.02.97 Leverkusen
18 Joshua **KIMMICH** (22) 08.02.95 Bayern Munich
2 Shkodran **MUSTAFI** (25) 17.04.92 Arsenal (Eng)
5 Marvin **PLATTENHARDT** (25) 26.01.92 Hertha Berlin
16 Antonio **RUDIGER** (24) 03.03.93 Roma (Ita)
17 Niklas **SULE** (21) 03.09.95 Hoffenheim

MIDFIELDERS

20 Julian **BRANDT** (21) 02.05.96 Leverkusen
14 Emre **CAN** (23) 12.01.94 Liverpool (Eng)
10 Kerem **DEMIRBAY** (23) 03.07.93 Hoffenheim
7 Julian **DRAXLER** (23) 20.09.93 PSG (Fra)
8 Leon **GORETZKA** (22) 06.02.95 Schalke
21 Sebastian **RUDY** (27) 28.02.90 Hoffenheim
13 Lars **STINDL** (28) 26.08.88 B M'gladbach
15 Amin **YOUNES** (23) 06.08.93 Ajax (Hol)

FORWARDS

9 Sandro **WAGNER** (29) 29.11.87 Hoffenheim
11 Timo **WERNER** (21) 06.03.96 RB Leipzig

COACH

Joachim **LOW** (57) 03.02.60

MEXICO

GOALKEEPERS

1 Rodolfo **COTA** (29) 03.07.87 Guadalajara
13 Guillermo **OCHOA** (31) 13.07.85 Granada (Spa)
12 Alfredo **TALAVERA** (34) 18.09.82 Toluca

DEFENDERS

2 Nestor **ARAUJO** (25) 21.08.91 Santos Laguna
4 Rafael **MARQUEZ** (38) 13.02.79 Atlas
15 Hector **MORENO** (29) 17.01.88 PSV (Hol)
21 Luis **REYES** (26) 03.04.91 Atlas
5 Diego **REYES** (24) 19.09.92 Espanyol (Spa)
3 Carlos **SALCEDO** (23) 29.09.93 Fiorentina (Ita)

MIDFIELDERS

23 Oswaldo **ALANIS** (28) 18.03.89 Guadalajara
20 Javier **AQUINO** (27) 11.02.90 Tigres
17 Jurgen **DAMM** (24) 07.11.92 Tigres
10 Giovani **DOS SANTOS** (28) 11.05.89 LA Galaxy (USA)
6 Jonathan **DOS SANTOS** (27) 26.04.90 Villarreal (Spa)
18 Andres **GUARDADO** (30) 28.09.86 PSV (Hol)
16 Hector **HERRERA** (27) 19.04.90 Porto (Por)
7 Miguel **LAYUN** (28) 25.06.88 Porto (Por)
11 Carlos **VELA** (28) 01.03.89 R Sociedad (Spa)

FORWARDS

8 Marco **FABIAN** (27) 21.07.89 E Frankfurt (Ger)
14 Javier **HERNANDEZ** (29) 01.06.88 Leverkusen (Ger)
9 Raul **JIMENEZ** (26) 05.05.1 Benfica (Por)
19 Oribe **PERALTA** (33) 12.01.84 America
22 Hirving **LOZANO** (21) 30.07.95 Pachuca

COACH

Juan Carlos **OSORIO** (Col) (56) 08.06.61

NEW ZEALAND

GOALKEEPERS

1 Stefan **MARINOVIC** (25) 07.10.91 Unterhaching (Ger)
12 Glen **MOSS** (34) 19.01.83 N'castle Jets (Aus)
23 Tamati **WILLIAMS** (33) 19.01.84 Waalwijk (Hol)

DEFENDERS

5 Michael **BOXALL** (28) 18.08.88 S'Sport U (SAf)
2 Sam **BROTHERTON** (20) 02.10.96 Sunderland (Eng)
18 Kip **COLVEY** (23) 15.03.94 San Jose (USA)
17 Tom **DOYLE** (24) 30.06.92 Wellington Ph
22 Andrew **DURANTE** (35) 03.05.82 Wellington Ph
16 Dane **INGHAM** (17) 06.08.99 Brisbane R (Aus)
21 Storm **ROUX** (24) 13.01.93 CC Mariners (Aus)
20 Tommy **SMITH** (27) 31.03.90 Ipswich (Eng)
4 Themistoklis **TZIMOPOULOS** (31) 20.11.85 PAS (Gre)
3 Deklan **WYNNE** (22) 20.03.95 Whitecaps II (USA)

MIDFIELDERS

15 Clayton **LEWIS** (20) 12.02.97 Auckland City
8 Michael **MCGLINCHEY** (30) 07.01.87 Wellington Ph
14 Ryan **THOMAS** (22) 20.12.94 PEC Zwolle (Hol)
6 Bill **TUILOMA** (22) 23.03.95 Marseille (Fra)

FORWARDS

7 Kosta **BARBAROUSES** (27) 19.02.90 Wellington Ph
13 Monty **PATTERSON** (20) 09.12.96 Ipswich (Eng)
11 Marco **ROJAS** (25) 05.11.91 M'bourne V (Aus)
19 Alex **RUFER** (21) 12.06.96 Wellington Ph
10 Shane **SMELTZ** (35) 29.09.81 Borneo (Ins)
9 Chris **WOOD** (25) 07.12.91 Leeds (Eng)

COACH

Anthony **HUDSON** (Eng) (36) 11.03.81

PORTUGAL

GOALKEEPERS

22 **BETO** (35) 01.05.82 Sporting
1 Rui **PATRICIO** (29) 15.02.88 Sporting
12 Jose **SE** (24) 17.01.93 Porto

DEFENDERS

2 Bruno **ALVES** (35) 27.11.81 Cagliari (Ita)
19 **ELISEU** (33) 01.10.83 Benfica
6 Jose **FONTE** (33) 22.12.83 West Ham (Eng)
5 Raphael **GUERREIRO** (23) 22.12.93 B D'mund (Ger)
4 Luis **NETO** (29) 26.05.88 Zenit (Rus)
3 **PEPE** (34) 26.02.83 Real Madrid (Spa)
11 Nelson **SEMEDO** (23) 16.11.93 Benfica
21 Cedric **SOARES** (25) 31.08.91 Soton (Eng)

MIDFIELDERS

14 William **CARVALHO** (25) 07.04.92 Sporting
13 **DANILO** (25) 09.09.91 Porto
15 Andre **GOMES** (23) 30.07.93 Barcelona (Spa)
8 Joao **MOUTINHO** (30) 08.09.86 Monaco (Fra)
16 **PIZZI** (27) 06.10.89 Benfica
23 Adrien **SILVA** (28) 15.03.89 Sporting
10 Bernardo **SILVA** (22) 10.08.94 Monaco (Fra)

FORWARDS

18 Gelson **MARTINS** (22) 11.05.95 Sporting
17 **NANI** (30) 17.11.86 Valencia (Spa)
20 Ricardo **QUARESMA** (33) 26.09.83 Besiktas (Tur)
7 Cristiano **RONALDO** (32) 05.02.85 Real Madrid (Spa)
9 Andre **SILVA** (21) 06.11.95 Porto

COACH

Fernando **SANTOS** (62) 10.10.54

RUSSIA

GOALKEEPERS

1 Igor **AKINFEEV** (31) 08.04.86 CSKA Moscow
12 Vladimir **GABULOV** (33) 19.10.83 Arsenal Tula
16 **GUILHERME** (31) 12.12.85 Lok Moscow

DEFENDERS

6 Georgi **DZHIKIYA** (23) 21.11.93 Spartak Moscow
23 Dmitri **KOMBAROV** (30) 22.01.87 Spartak Moscow
13 Fyodor **KUDRYASHOV** (30) 05.04.87 Rostov
14 Ilya **KUTEPOV** (23) 29.07.93 Spartak Moscow
3 Roman **SHISHKIN** (30) 27.01.87 Krasnodar
2 Igor **SMOLNIKOV** (28) 08.08.88 Zenit
5 Viktor **VASIN** (28) 06.10.88 CSKA Moscow

MIDFIELDERS

4 Yury **GAZINSKY** (27) 20.07.89 Krasnodar
8 Denis **GLUSHAKOV** (30) 27.01.87 Spartak Moscow
17 Aleksandr **GOLOVIN** (21) 30.05.96 CSKA Moscow
10 Ruslan **KAMBOLOV** (27) 01.01.90 Rubin Kazan
15 Aleksei **MIRANCHUK** (21) 17.10.95 Lok Moscow
19 Aleksandr **SAMEDOV** (32) 19.07.84 Spartak
22 Dmitri **TARASOV** (30) 18.03.87 Lok Moscow
21 Aleksandr **YEROKHIN** (27) 13.10.89 Rostov
18 Yuri **ZHIRKOV** (33) 20.08.83 Zenit

FORWARDS

11 Aleksandr **BUKHAROV** (32) 12.03.85 Rostov
20 Maksim **KANUNNIKOV** (25) 14.07.91 Rubin Kazan
7 Dmitry **POLOZ** (25) 12.07.91 Rostov
9 Fyodor **SMOLOV** (27) 09.02.90 Krasnodar

COACH

Stanislav **CHERCHESOV** (53) 02.09.63

(all ages as of 17.06.17)

Internationals

CONFEDERATIONS CUP

Played in Russia

Group A

Jun17 - St Petersburg
Russia 2 (Boxall og 31, Smolov 69)
New Zealand 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 50,251. **Ref:** Roldan (Col)
Russia: Akinfeev - Samedov, Dzhikiya, Vasin, Kudryashov, Zhirkov, Erokhin (Tarasov 77), Glushakov, Golovin, Smolov (Miranchuk 90), Poloz (Bukharov 64).
New Zealand: Marinovic - Colvey (Patterson 83), Smith, Durante, Boxall, Wynne, Barbarouses (Tuiloma 61), McGlinchey, Thomas, Rojas (Smeltz 71), Wood.

Jun18 - Kazan
Portugal 2 (Quaresma 34, Cedric 86)
Mexico 2 (Javier Hernandez 42, Moreno 90+1)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 34,372. **Ref:** Pitana (Arg)
Portugal: Rui Patricio - Cedric, Pepe, Jose Fonte, Raphael Guerreiro, Quaresma (Andre Silva 82), William Carvalho, Joao Moutinho (Adrien Silva 58), Andre Gomes, Nani (Gelson Martins 58), Cristiano Ronaldo.
Mexico: Ochoa - Salcedo (Araujo 67), D Reyes, Moreno, Layun, J Dos Santos, Herrera, Guardado, Vela (G Dos Santos 57), Javier Hernandez, Jimenez (Peralta 79).

Jun 21 - Moscow
Russia 0
Portugal 1 (Cristiano Ronaldo 8)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 42,759. **Ref:** Rocchi (Ita)
Russia: Akinfeev - Shishkin (Erokhin 46), Dzhikiya, Vasin, Kudryashov (Bukharov 83), Kombarov (Poloz 68), Samedov, Glushakov, Golovin, Zhirkov, Smolov.
Portugal: Rui Patricio - Cedric, Pepe, Bruno Alves, Raphael Guerreiro (Eliseu 65), Bernardo Silva, William Carvalho, Adrien Silva (Danilo Pereira 83), Andre Gomes, Andre Silva (Gelson Martins 78), Cristiano Ronaldo.

Jun 21 - Sochi
Mexico 2 (Jimenez 54, Peralta 72)
New Zealand 1 (Wood 42)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 25,133. **Ref:** Gassama (Gam)
Mexico: Talavera - Salcedo (Moreno 33; Marquez 68), Araujo, Alanis (Herrera 46), G Dos Santos, D Reyes, Fabian, Aquino, Damm, Jimenez, Peralta.
New Zealand: Marinovic - Ingham (Patterson 82), Boxall, Durante, Smith, Wynne, Lewis (Tuiloma 58), McGlinchey, Thomas, Rojas (Barbarouses 73), Wood.

Jun 24 - Kazan
Mexico 2 (Araujo 30, Lozano 52)
Russia 1 (Samedov 25)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 41,585. **Ref:** Al Mirdasi (Sau)
Mexico: Ochoa - D Reyes (L Reyes 39), Araujo, Moreno, Layun, J Dos Santos, Herrera, Guardado (Alanis 70), Lozano, Javier Hernandez, Vela (Aquino 46).
Russia: Akinfeev - Samedov, Dzhikiya, Vasin, Kudryashov, Zhirkov, Erokhin (Smolnikov 70), Glushakov, Golovin, Smolov (Kanunnikov 78), Bukharov (Poloz 64). *Sent off: Zhirkov 68.*

Jun 24 - St Petersburg
New Zealand 0
Portugal 4 (Cristiano Ronaldo pen 33, Bernardo Silva 37, Andre Silva 80, Nani 90+1)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 56,290. **Ref:** Geiger (USA)
New Zealand: Marinovic - Ingham, Boxall, Durante (Smeltz 74), Smith, Doyle, Lewis (Barbarouses 65), McGlinchey (Tuiloma 37), Thomas, Rojas, Wood.
Portugal: Rui Patricio - Nelson Semedo, Pepe, Bruno Alves, Eliseu, Quaresma (Gelson Martins 83), Danilo Pereira, Joao Moutinho, Bernardo Silva (Pizzi 46), Andre Silva, Cristiano Ronaldo (Nani 67).

CONFEDERATIONS CUP – GROUP A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Portugal (Q)	3	2	1	0	7	2	7
Mexico (Q)	3	2	1	0	6	4	7
Russia	3	1	0	2	3	3	3
New Zealand	3	0	0	3	1	8	0

Group B

Jun18 - Moscow
Cameroon 0
Chile 2 (Vidal 81, Vargas 90+1)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 33,492. **Ref:** Skomina (Sln)
Cameroon: Ondoa - Mabouka, Ngadeu, Teikeu, Fai, Siani (Ngamaleu 86), Zambo Anguissa (Mandjeck 89), Djoum, Bassogog, Aboubakar, Moukandjo.
Chile: Herrera - Isla, Medel, Jara, Beausejour, Vidal, M Diaz, Aranguiz (Silva 71), Fuenzalida (Valencia 64), Vargas, Puch (Sanchez 58).

Jun19 - Sochi
Australia 2 (Rogic 41, Juric 56)
Germany 3 (Stindl 5, Draxler pen 44, Goretzka 48)
HT: 1-2. **Att:** 28,605. **Ref:** Geiger (USA)
Australia: Ryan - Wright, Sainsbury, Degenek, Leckie, Milligan, Mooy, Behich, Luongo (Kruse 46), Juric (Cahill 86), Rogic (Troisi 71).
Germany: Leno - Kimmich, Rudiger, Mustafi, Hector, Brandt (Sule 63), Stindl (Can 78), Rudy, Goretzka, Draxler, Wagner (Werner 57).

Jun 22 - St Petersburg
Cameroon 1 (Zambo Anguissa 45+1)
Australia 1 (Milligan pen 60)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 35,021. **Ref:** Mazic (Ser)
Cameroon: Ondoa - Mabouka, Ngadeu, Teikeu, Fai, Siani, Zambo Anguissa, Djoum, Bassogog, Aboubakar, Moukandjo (Toko Ekambi 77).
Australia: Ryan - Wright, Sainsbury, Degenek, Leckie, Mooy, Milligan, Gersbach, Rogic (Irvine 79), Kruse (Troisi 65), Juric (Cahill 70).

Jun 22 - Kazan
Germany 1 (Stindl 41)
Chile 1 (Sanchez 6)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 38,222. **Ref:** Faghani (Irn)
Germany: Ter Stegen - Ginter, Mustafi, Sule, Kimmich, Can, Rudy, Hector, Goretzka, Draxler, Stindl.
Chile: Herrera - Isla, Medel (P Diaz 71), Jara, Beausejour, Aranguiz (Silva 90), M Diaz, Hernandez, Vidal, Vargas (Rodriguez 82), Sanchez.

Jun 25 - Sochi
Germany 3 (Demirbay 48, Werner 66, 81)
Cameroon 1 (Aboubakar 78)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 30,230. **Ref:** Roldan (Col)
Germany: Ter Stegen - Ginter, Rudiger, Sule, Kimmich, Can, Rudy (Henrichs 74), Plattenhardt, Demirbay (Brandt 77), Draxler (Younes 80), Werner.
Cameroon: Ondoa - Mabouka, Ngadeu, Teikeu, Fai, Siani, Zambo Anguissa, Djoum (Ngamaleu 58), Bassogog (Toko Ekambi 82), Aboubakar, Moukandjo (Guihoata 70). *Sent off: Mabouka 64.*

Jun 25 - Moscow
Chile 1 (Rodriguez 67)
Australia 1 (Troisi 42)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 33,639. **Ref:** Rocchi (Ita)
Chile: Bravo - Isla, P Diaz, Jara, Mena, Vidal, Silva, Aranguiz (Hernandez 46), Fuenzalida (Rodriguez 46), Vargas (M Diaz 82), Sanchez.
Australia: Ryan - R McGowan, Sainsbury (Wright 72), Milligan, Kruse, Irvine, Luongo, Behich, Cahill (Leckie 57), Juric (Maclaren 62), Troisi.

CONFEDERATIONS CUP – GROUP B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Germany (Q)	3	2	1	0	7	4	7
Chile (Q)	3	1	2	0	4	2	5
Australia	3	0	2	1	4	5	2
Cameroon	3	0	1	2	2	6	1

● *Top 2 in both groups qualified for semi-finals*

Semi-finals

Jun 28 - Kazan
Portugal 0
Chile 0
Aet. Chile 3-0 on pens
Att: 40,855. **Ref:** Faghani (Irn)
Portugal: Rui Patricio - Cedric, Bruno Alves, Jose Fonte, Eliseu, Bernardo Silva (Quaresma 83), Adrien Silva (Joao Moutinho 102), William Carvalho, Andre Gomes (Gelson Martins 116), Andre Silva (Nani 76), Cristiano Ronaldo.
Chile: Bravo - Isla (Fuenzalida 120), Medel, Jara, Beausejour, Aranguiz, M Diaz, Hernandez (Silva 112), Vidal, Vargas (Rodriguez 86), Sanchez.

Jun 29 - Sochi
Germany 4 (Goretzka 6, 8, Werner 59, Younes 90+1)
Mexico 1 (Fabian 89)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 37,923. **Ref:** Pitana (Arg)
Germany: Ter Stegen - Kimmich, Ginter, Rudiger, Henrichs, Goretzka (Can 67), Rudy, Hector, Stindl (Brandt 78), Draxler (Younes 81), Werner.
Mexico: Ochoa - Layun, Araujo, Moreno, Alanis, J Dos Santos (Marquez 66), Herrera, G Dos Santos (Fabian 62), Jimenez, Javier Hernandez, Aquino (Lozano 46).

3rd-place match

Jul 2 - Moscow
Portugal 2 (Pepe 90+1, Adrien Silva pen 104)
Mexico 1 (Luis Neto og 54)
Aet. **HT:** 0-0. **90mins:** 1-1. **Att:** 42,659.
Ref: Al Mirdasi (Sau)
Portugal: Rui Patricio - Nelson Semedo, Pepe, Luis Neto, Eliseu, Gelson Martins, Joao Moutinho (Adrien Silva 82), Danilo Pereira (Andre Gomes 82), Pizzi (William Carvalho 91), Andre Silva, Nani (Quaresma 70).
Sent off: Nelson Semedo106.
Mexico: Ochoa - Layun, Araujo, Moreno, L Reyes, Herrera, Marquez (Fabian 106), Guardado (J Dos Santos 80), Vela, Peralta (Lozano 61), Javier Hernandez (Jimenez 85).
Sent off: Jimenez112.

Final

Jul 2 - St Petersburg
Chile 0
Germany 1 (Stindl 20)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 57,268. **Ref:** Mazic (Ser)
Chile: Bravo - Isla, Medel, Jara, Beausejour, Aranguiz (Sagal 81), M Diaz (Valencia 53), Hernandez, Vidal, Vargas (Puch 81), Sanchez.
Germany: Ter Stegen - Ginter, Mustafi, Rudiger, Kimmich, Goretzka (Sule 90+2), Rudy, Hector, Stindl, Draxler, Werner (Can 79).

2018 WORLD CUP QUALIFIERS

ASIA section

3rd round

Group A

Jun12 - Tehran
Iran 2 (Azmoun 23, Taremi 88)
Uzbekistan 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 59,730. **Ref:** Al Kaf (Oma)
Iran: Beiranvand - Rezaeian, Hosseini, Pouraliganji, Mohammadi, Karimi, Ezatolahi, Shojaei (Dejagah 70), Jahanbakhsh (Amiri 45+2), Azmoun, Taremi (Ghoochannejhad 90).
Uzbekistan: Lobanov - Krimets, Shorakhmedov, Ismailov, Andreev (Khashimov 7), Afonin (Rashidov 53), O Akhmedov, Shomurodov, Haydarov, Abdukholikov (Masharipov 65), Sergeev.

Jun13 - Doha
Qatar 3 (Al Haidos 25, 75, Akram Afif 51)
South Korea 2 (Ki Sung-yueng 62, Hwang Hee-chan 70)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 5,373. **Ref:** Perera (Sri)
Qatar: Al Sheeb - Pedro Miguel, Khoukhi, I Majid, Musa (Y Abubakar 81), Kasola, Assadalla, Hassan (Kheder 62), Tabata, Al Haidos, Akram Afif (Boudiaf 67).
South Korea: Kwoun Sun-tae - Choi Chul-soon, Kwak Tae-hwi, Jang Hyun-soo, Kim Jin-su, Ki Sung-yueng, Han Kook-young (Nam Tae-hee 79), Ji Dong-won (Hwang Il-soo 53), Lee Jae-sung, Son Heung-min (Lee Keun-ho 34), Hwang Hee-chan.

Jun13 - Krubong, Malaysia
Syria 2 (Al Mawas pen 12, Al Salih 90+3)
China 2 (Gao Lin pen 68, Wu Xi 75)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 4,737. **Ref:** Al Jeneibi (UAE)
Syria: Alma - Jenyat, O Midani (Al Douni 86), Al Salih, Ajan, Haj Mohamad, Al Mawas, Z Midani, Mobayed (Al Nakdali 63), F Youssef (Kalfa 80), Mardikian.
China: Zeng Cheng - Deng Hanwen (Jiang Zhipeng 65), Zhang Linpeng, Feng Xiaoting, Wang Shenchao, Wu Xi, Huang Bowen (Hao Junmin 83), Yu Hanchao, Zhang Xizhe (Xiao Zhi 56), Wu Lei, Gao Lin.

Group B

Jun 8 - Adelaide
Australia 3 (Juric 7, 36, Rogic 64)
Saudi Arabia 2 (Al Dawsari 23, Al Sahlawi 45+2)
HT: 2-2. **Att:** 29,785. **Ref:** Irmatov (Uzb)
Australia: Ryan - R McGowan, Sainsbury, Degenek, Mooy, Jedinak, Leckie, Rogic, Irvine (Kruse 63), Smith (Behich 46), Juric (Luongo 85).
Saudi Arabia: Al Mosailem - Al Burayk, Osama Hawsawi, Omar Hawsawi, Al Zori, Al Khaibri (Otayf 69), Al Faraj, Al Shehri (Asiri 82), Al Jassim, Al Dawsari (Al Moasher 82), Al Sahlawi.

Jun13 - Tehran, Iran
Iraq 1 (Kamel 72)
Japan 1 (Osako 8)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 983. **Ref:** Fu (Chn)
Iraq: Gassid - Salem, Ibrahim, Sulaka, Adnan, Nouri (Attwan 80), Kamel (Resan 77), Yasin (Tariq 59), Abdul-Zahra, Abdul-Amir, Abdul-Raheem.
Japan: Kawashima - H Sakai (G Sakai 76), Yoshida, Shoji, Nagatomo, Endo, Ideguchi (Konno 62), Honda, Haraguchi (Kurata 70), Kubo, Osako.

Jun13 - Bangkok
Thailand 1 (Mongkol 69)
United Arab Emirates 1 (Mabkhout 90+3)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 24,417. **Ref:** Bin Jahari (Sin)
Thailand: Kawin - Adison, Chalermpong, Pansa, Peerapat, Tanaboon, Mongkol (Nurul 90+4), Sanrawat, Thitipan, Siroch (Bordin 90+6), Adisak (Wattana 90+3).
UAE: Naser - Sanqour (Fawzi 27), Al Kamali, Salem, Khamis, T Ahmed, Barman, Khalil (Al Khaddeim 66), O Abdulrahman, Esmaeel (Matar 73), Mabkhout.

CONCACAF section

5th round

Jun 8 - San Jose
Costa Rica 0
Panama 0
Att: 35,040. **Ref:** Marrufo (USA)
Costa Rica: Navas - Gamboa, Waston, Acosta, Gonzalez, Oviedo, B Ruiz, Borges, Azofeifa (Guzman 69), Bolanos (Campbell 46), Venegas (Urena 88). *Sent off: Gonzalez 54.*
Panama: Penedo - Machado, R Torres, Escobar, Ovalle, Cooper (Barcenas 62), Godoy, G Gomez (Pimentel 80), Quintero, Diaz (B Perez 75), Tejada.

Jun 8 - Mexico City
Mexico 3 (Alanis 34, Lozano 63, Jimenez 66)
Honduras 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 38,565. **Ref:** Fischer (Can)
Mexico: Ochoa - Salcedo (Duenas 54), D Reyes, Alanis, L Reyes, Herrera, J Dos Santos, Vela, G Dos Santos (Lozano 56), J M Corona (Peralta 69), Jimenez.
Honduras: Escober - Crisanto, Johnny Palacios, M Figueroa, H Figueroa, Izaguirre, M Martinez (O Garcia 52), Morazan, Claros (Discua 71), Andino (Quioto 58), Elis.

Jun 8 - Denver
United States 2 (Pulisic 52, 62)
Trinidad & Tobago 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 19,188. **Ref:** Moncada (Hnd)
United States: Howard - Yedlin, Cameron, Brooks, Villafana, Bradley, Nagbe, Pulisic, F Johnson (Bedoya 74), Altidore (Wood 83), Dempsey (Acosta 61).
Trinidad & Tobago: Jan-Michael Williams - C Edwards, Cyrus, Bateau, M Williams, J Jones (S Winchester 68), Molino, Hyland (Paul 76), K George, N Lewis, K Jones (Boatswain 83).

Jun11 - Mexico City
Mexico 1 (Vela 23)
United States 1 (Bradley 6)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 71,319. **Ref:** Aguilar (ESv)
Mexico: Ochoa - Salcedo, D Reyes, Moreno, Alanis (Gallardo 31), J Dos Santos (Pineda 77), Herrera, Fabian (Aquino 53), Vela, Javier Hernandez, Lozano.
United States: Guzan - Gonzalez, Cameron, Ream, Yedlin, Acosta, Bradley, Beasley, Arriola (Nagbe 64), Wood (Altidore 79), Pulisic (Zusi 90+1).

Jun13 - San Jose
Costa Rica 2 (Calvo 1, B Ruiz 44)
Trinidad & Tobago 1 (Molino 35)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 34,429. **Ref:** Martinez (Cub)
Costa Rica: Navas - Gamboa, Waston (Umana 22), Acosta, Calvo, Oviedo, Campbell, Borges, B Ruiz, Venegas (Guzman 60), Urena (Wallace 82).
Trinidad & Tobago: Jan-Michael Williams - David, Cyrus, Bateau, M Williams (S Winchester 90), Gonzales, N Lewis, Arcia (Hyland 46), Molino, J Jones (C Edwards 78), Boatswain.

Jun13 - Panama City
Panama 2 (B Perez 41, R Torres 90)
Honduras 2 (Quioto 6, Elis 65)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 25,900. **Ref:** Garcia (Mex)
Panama: Penedo - Murillo, R Torres, Escobar, Davis, Barcenas (G Gomez 69), Cooper, Godoy, Quintero (Diaz 69), B Perez (Tejada 80), G Torres.
Honduras: Escober - Beckeles, H Figueroa, M Figueroa, Alvarado, Izaguirre, Acosta, Mejia (Morazan 83), Quioto (Andino 74), Elis, R Martinez (Tejeda 76).

EUROPE section

Group A

Jun 9 - Borisov
Belarus 2 (Sivakov pen 33, Savitskiy 80)
Bulgaria 1 (Kostadinov 90+1)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 6,150. **Ref:** Jug (Sln)
Belarus: Chernik - Politevich, Sivakov, Filipenko, Aliseiko, Balanovich, Dragun, Maevski (Gordeichuk 89), Matveichyk, Laptev (Bykov 74), Savitskiy (Skavysh 82).
Bulgaria: Mihaylov - S Popov, Chorbadzhiyski, Bozhikov, Zanev, Dyakov, Kostadinov, Manolev (G Milanov 81), I Popov (Chochev 64), Tonev, Delev (Galabinov 54).

Jun 9 - Rotterdam
Holland 5 (Robben 21, Sneijder 34, Wijnaldum 62, Promes 70, Janssen pen 84)
Luxembourg 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 41,300. **Ref:** Frankowski (Pol)
Holland: Cillessen - Veltman, De Vrij, Hoedt, Blind, Wijnaldum, Sneijder (Ake 82), Strootman, Robben (Lens 73), Janssen, Depay (Promes 66).
Luxembourg: Schon - Jans, Chanot (Delgado 26), Mahmutovic, Malget, Bensi, Rodrigues (Bohnert 85), C Martins, V Thill (Gerson 54), S Thill, Turpel.

Jun 9 - Stockholm
Sweden 2 (Durmaz 43, Toivonen 90+3)
France 1 (Giroud 37)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 48,783. **Ref:** Atkinson (Eng)
Sweden: Olsen - Lustig, Lindelof, Granqvist, Augustinsson, Durmaz (Claesson 76), J Johansson, Ekdal (Sebastian Larsson 77), Forsberg, Berg (Guidetti 89), Toivonen.
France: Lloris - Sidibe, Koscielny, Varane, Mendy, Matuidi, Pogba, Sissoko, Griezmann (Mbappe 75), Payet (Lemar 76), Giroud.

Group B

Jun 9 - Andorra La Vella
Andorra 1 (Rebes 26)
Hungary 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 2,376. **Ref:** Kalogeropoulos (Gre)
Andorra: Gomes - Jesus Rubio, Llovera, Lima, San Nicolas, Clemente (Riera 83), Vales, Pujol (Ayala 88), Rebes, A Martinez, Alaez (Maneiro 68).
Hungary: Gulacsi - Bese, Lang (Balogh 56), Toth, Vinicius, Gyurcso (Sallai 71), A Nagy, Kleinheisler, Stieber (D Nagy 21), Dzsudzsak, Eppel.

Jun 9 - Torshavn
Faroe Islands 0
Switzerland 2 (Xhaka 36, Shaqiri 59)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 4,594. **Ref:** Mazzoleni (Ita)
Faroe Islands: G Nielsen - Naes, Gregersen, J Davidsen (Faero 70), V Davidsen, Vatnhamar, Hansson (Lokin 66), Benjaminsen, F Justinussen, Sorensen, K Olsen (R Joensen 61).
Switzerland: Sommer - Lichtsteiner, Djourou, Akanji, Moubandje, Xhaka, Behrami, Shaqiri, Dzemaili (Freuler 86), Mehmedi (Zuber 63), Seferovic (Derdiyok 78).

Jun 9 - Riga
Latvia 0
Portugal 3 (Cristiano Ronaldo 41, 63, Andre Silva 67)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 8,087. **Ref:** Kovacs (Rom)
Latvia: Vanins - Jagodinskis, Kolesovs, Gorkss, Maksimenko, Kluskins (Indrans 62), Kazacoks (Vardanjans 72), O Laizans, Solovjovs, Sabala, D Ikaunieks (Rakels 68).
Portugal: Rui Patricio - Cedric (Nelson Semedo 71), Bruno Alves, Jose Fonte, Raphael Guerreiro, Joao Moutinho, William Carvalho, Andre Gomes, Gelson Martins (Quaresma 58), Andre Silva (Nani 80), Cristiano Ronaldo.

Group C

Jun10 - Baku
Azerbaijan 0
Northern Ireland 1 (Dallas 90+2)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 27,978. **Ref:** Estrada Fernandez (Spa)
Azerbaijan: K Agayev - Medvedev, B Huseynov, R F Sadygov, Pashayev, J Huseynov, Garayev, Richard Almeida, Ismayilov (Amirguliyev 84), Sheydaev (Abdullayev 90), Nazarov (Alaskarov 77).
Northern Ireland: McGovern - C McLaughlin, Hughes, McAuley (McGinn 25; Hodson 86), J Evans, Dallas, Brunt, Norwood, Davis, Boyce (K Lafferty 77), Magennis.

Jun10 - Nuremberg
Germany 7 (Draxler 11, Wagner 16, 29, 85, Younes 38, Mustafi 47, Brandt 72)
San Marino 0
HT: 4-0. **Att:** 32,467. **Ref:** Petrescu (Rom)
Germany: Ter Stegen - Kimmich, Mustafi, Hector (Plattenhardt 55), Brandt, Can, Younes, Goretzka, Draxler (Demme 76), Wagner, Stindl (Werner 55).
San Marino: Benedettini - Bonini, Alessandro Della Valle, Biordi, Cesarini (Brolli 87), A Golinucci, Mazza (Bernardi 69), Cervellini, Zafferani, Palazzi, Rinaldi (Hirsch 78).

Jun10 - Oslo
Norway 1 (Soderlund pen 55)
Czech Republic 1 (Gebre Selassie 36)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 12,179. **Ref:** Marriner (Eng)
Norway: Jarstein - Svensson, Nordtveit, Reginiussen (Valsvik 33), Aleesami, M Elyounoussi, Berge, Johansen, Berget (Daehli 61), T Elyounoussi, Soderlund (Johnsen 71).
Czech Republic: Vaclik - Kaderabek, Sivok, Brabec, Gebre Selassie, Krejci, Darida (Horava 79), Dockal, Soucek, Zmrhal (Jankto 43), Krmencik (Schick 63).

Group D

Jun11 - Chisinau
Moldova 2 (Ginsari 15, Dedov 36)
Georgia 2 (Merebashvili 65, Kazaishvili 70)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 4,803. **Ref:** Ekberg (Swe)
Moldova: Namasco - Tigirlas (Racu 78), Posmac, Epureanu, Bordian, Cebotaru, Carp (Cojocari 73), A Antoniuc, Cociuc (Bugaiov 73), Dedov, Ginsari.
Georgia: Makaridze - Kverkvelia, Kashia, Tabidze, U Lobzhanidze (Kvekveskiri 35), Kankava, Daushvili (Kazaishvili 46), Navalovski, Arabidze, Kacharava, Dvalishvili (Merebashvili 64).

Jun11 - Dublin
Republic of Ireland 1 (Walters 85)
Austria 1 (Hinteregger 31)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 50,000.
Ref: Fernandez Borbalan (Spa)
Republic of Ireland: Randolph - Christie, Duffy, K Long, Ward (Murphy 56), Arter (Hoolahan 71), Whelan (McGeady 77), Brady, Hendrick, McClean, Walters.
Austria: Lindner - Lainer, Dragovic, Prodl, Hinteregger, Baumgartlinger, Junuzovic (Grillitsch 79), Alaba, Lazaro, Burgstaller (Harnik 75), Kainz (Gregoritsch 90).

Jun11 - Belgrade
Serbia 1 (A Mitrovic 74)
Wales 1 (Ramsey pen 35)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 46,673. **Ref:** De Sousa (Por)
Serbia: Stojkovic - Ivanovic, Nastasic, Vukovic, Rukavina, Matic, Milivojevic (Gudelj 63), Kolarov, Kostic (Prijovic 67), A Mitrovic, Tadic.
Wales: Hennessey - Gunter, Chester, A Williams, B Davies, Richards, Allen, D Edwards (Huws 73), Ledley, Ramsey, Vokes (Lawrence 86).

Group E

Jun10 - Almaty
Kazakhstan 1 (Kuat 76)
Denmark 3 (N Jorgensen 27, Eriksen pen 51, Dolberg 81)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 19,065. **Ref:** Bezborodov (Rus)
Kazakhstan: Loria - Suyumbayev, Akhmetov, Logvinenko, Shomko (Vorogovskiy 67), Muzhikov, Zhukov, Kuat, Islamkhan, Nurgaliyev (Beisebekov 56), Nuserbayev (Tungyshbayev 74). *Sent off: Islamkhan 43.*
Denmark: Ronnow - Larsen (Dalsgaard 82), Kjaer, Vestergaard, Durmisi, Kvist (Schone 46), Delaney, Eriksen, Y Poulsen (Dolberg 68), N Jorgensen, Braithwaite.

Jun10 - Podgorica
Montenegro 4 (Beciraj 2, Jovetic 28, 54, 82)
Armenia 1 (Koryan 89)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 6,861. **Ref:** Blom (Hol)
Montenegro: Petkovic - Marusic, Savic, Simic, Tomasevic (Klimenta 75), N Vukcevic (Scekic 71), Kosovic, Jankovic, Jovetic, Jovovic (Haksabanovic 84), Beciraj.
Armenia: Beglaryan - Mkoyan (Artak Yedigaryan 46), T Voskanyan, Andonian, Daghbashyan, Mkhitaryan, A Grigoryan, K Hovhannisyan, Pizzelli (Barseghyan 73), Ozbiliz (E Manucharyan 59), Koryan.

Jun10 - Warsaw
Poland 3 (Lewandowski pen 29, 57, pen 62)
Romania 1 (Stancu 77)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 57,128. **Ref:** Buquet (Fra)
Poland: Szczesny - Piszczek, Cionek, Pazdan, Jedrzejczyk, Blaszczykowski, Maczynski (Krychowiak 44), Linetty (Milik 72), Zielinski (Teodorczyk 81), Grosicki, Lewandowski.
Romania: Tatarusanu - Benzar, Chiriches, Sapunaru, Tosca, Latovlevici (Grozav 60), Stancu, Marin (Hanca 79), Pintilii, Chipciu (Stanciu 60), Andone.

Group F

Jun10 - Vilnius
Lithuania 1 (Novikovas 90+3)
Slovakia 2 (Weiss 32, Hamsik 58)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 4,083. **Ref:** Grafe (Ger)
Lithuania: Zubas - Borovskij, Kijanskas, L Klimavicius, Slavickas, Slivka (Dapkus 75), Kuklys, Cernych, Novikovas, Sernas, Valskis (Matulevicius 72).
Slovakia: Dubravka - Pekarik, Skrtel, Durica, Hubocan (Gyomber 58), Mak (Rusnak 77), Gregus, Skriniar, Weiss, Hamsik, Duda (Benes 90).

Jun10 - Glasgow
Scotland 2 (Griffiths 87, 90)
England 2 (Oxlade-Chamberlain 70, Kane 90+3)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 48,520. **Ref:** Tagliavento (Ita)
Scotland: Gordon - Berra, Mulgrew, Robertson, Tierney, Brown, Armstrong, Anya (C Martin 81), Snodgrass (Fraser 67), Morrison (McArthur 46), Griffiths.
England: Hart - Walker, Cahill, Smalling, Bertrand, Dier, Rashford (Oxlade-Chamberlain 65), Lallana, Alli (Sterling 84), Livermore (Defoe 90+2), Kane.

Jun10 - Ljubljana
Slovenia 2 (Ilicic 45+2, Novakovic 84)
Malta 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 7,839. **Ref:** Evans (Wal)
Slovenia: Oblak - Skubic (Palcic 89), Delamea Mlinar, Mevlja, Jokic, Kurtic, Krhin, Bezjak (Omladic 59), Ilicic, Verbic, Beric (Novakovic 64).
Malta: Hogg - A Muscat, Z Muscat, Agius, S Borg (Magri 89), Failla, S Pisani, Kristensen (Gambin 46), R Fenech, Effiong, Schembri (M Mifsud 62).

Group G

Jun11 - Haifa
Israel 0
Albania 3 (Sadiku 22, 44, Memushaj 71)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 15,150. **Ref:** Kulbakov (Bls)
Israel: Goresh - Dasa, Tibi, Tzedek, Tawatha, Natcho, Golasa (Shechter 53), Cohen, Refaelov (Vered 57), Sahar (Benayoun 67), Zahavi.
Albania: Strakosha - Hysaj, Gjimshiti, Kukeli (Veseli 82), Mavraj, Aliji, Hyka, Memushaj, Roshi (Lila 53), Sadiku (Cikalleshi 70), Abrashi.

Jun11 - Udine
Italy 5 (Insigne 35, Belotti 52, Eder 75, Bernardeschi 83, Gabbiadini 90+1)
Liechtenstein 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 20,514. **Ref:** Clancy (Sco)
Italy: Buffon - Darmian, Barzagli, Chiellini, Spinazzola, Candreva (Bernardeschi 60), Pellegrini, De Rossi, Insigne, Belotti (Gabbiadini 75), Immobile (Eder 67).
Liechtenstein: Jehle - Rechsteiner, Malin, Gubser, Goppel, Polverino (Quintans 88), Salanovic (Brandle 60), N Hasler, M Buchel, Burgmeier (Wolfinger 68), Frick.

Jun11 - Skopje
Macedonia 1 (Ristovski 66)
Spain 2 (Silva 15, Diego Costa 27)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 20,675. **Ref:** Gil (Pol)
Macedonia: Dimitrievski - Tosevski (Trajkovski 74), Sikov, Mojsov (Trickovski 85), Ristevski, Ristovski, Stjepanovic (Elmas 46), Spirovski, Alioski, Nestorovski, Pandev.
Spain: De Gea - Carvajal, Sergio Ramos, Pique, Jordi Alba, Busquets, Iniesta (Saul 90+2), Silva (Pedro 69), Isco, Diego Costa, Thiago (Koke 74).

Group H

Jun 9 - Zenica
Bosnia-Herzegovina 0
Greece 0
Att: 11,000. **Ref:** Rizzoli (Ita)
Bosnia-Herzegovina: Begovic - Bicakcic, O Vranjes, Sunjic (Dumic 69), Zukanovic, Visca, Pjanic, Jajalo, Lulic (Kodro 21; Besic 77), Ibisevic, Dzeko.
Greece: Karnezis - Torosidis, Manolas, Papastathopoulos, Stafylidis, Mantalos (Kourbelis 90+1), Tziolis, Fortounis (Maniatis 90+4), Zeca, Bakasetas (Donis 50), Mitroglou.

Jun 9 - Tallinn
Estonia 0
Belgium 2 (Mertens 31, Chadli 86)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 10,176. **Ref:** Beaton (Sco)
Estonia: Aksalu - Teniste, Baranov, Klavan, Pikk, Kait (Henri Anier 85), Mets, Artjom Dmitrijev, Zenjov (Ojamaa 79), Vassiljev, Luts (Kallaste 75). *Sent off: Artjom Dmitrijev 44.*
Belgium: Courtois - Alderweireld, Kompany, Vertonghen, Fellaini, Witsel, Chadli, Mertens (Batshuayi 81), De Bruyne, Carrasco, R Lukaku.

Jun 9 - Faro-Loule, Portugal
Gibraltar 1 (Anthony Hernandez 30)
Cyprus 2 (R Chipolina og 10, Sotiriou 87)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 488. **Ref:** Popov (Bul)
Gibraltar: Ibrahim - Garcia, R Chipolina, R Casciaro (Coombes 81), J Chipolina, Bardon (K Casciaro 90), Barnett, Mascarenhas-Olivero, Anthony Hernandez, L Casciaro, Walker.
Cyprus: Panayi - Demetriou, Merkis, Laifis, Ioannou, Artymatas (Mytidis 82), C Kyriakou, Christofi (Makris 73), Charalambides, Margaca (Alexandrou 61), Sotiriou.

Group I

Jun11 - Tampere
Finland 1 (Pohjanpalo 73)
Ukraine 2 (Konoplyanka 51, Besedin 75)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 8,723. **Ref:** Yefet (Isr)
Finland: Hradecky - Arkivuo, Ojala, N Moisander, Raitala, Lam, Yaghoubi, Lod (Jensen 68), Hamalainen, Uronen (Markkanen 84), Pukki (Pohjanpalo 68).
Ukraine: Pyatov - Butko, Ordets, Rakitskyi, Matviyenko, Konoplyanka (Sobol 87), Malinovskyi, Stepanenko, Yarmolenko, Kovalenko (Shepelyev 76), Seleznyov (Besedin 65).

Jun11 - Reykjavik
Iceland 1 (H Magnusson 90)
Croatia 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 9,775. **Ref:** Undiano Mallenco (Spa)
Iceland: Halldorsson - B Saevarsson, K Arnason, R Sigurdsson (Ingason 90+1), H Magnusson, J Gudmundsson, A Gunnarsson, Hallfredsson, B Bjarnason (R Gislason 81), G Sigurdsson, A Finnbogason (B Sigurdarson 77).
Croatia: L Kalinic - Jedvaj, Lovren, Vida, Pivaric, Modric, Kovacic, Badelj, Perisic, N Kalinic (Brozovic 63), Mandzukic (Santini 88).

Jun11 - Shkoder, Albania
Kosovo 1 (Rrahmani 22)
Turkey 4 (Volkan Sen 6, Cengiz 31, Burak 61, Ozan 82)
HT: 1-2. **Att:** 3,758. **Ref:** Zelinka (CzR)
Kosovo: Ujkani (Nurkovic 53) - Vojvoda, Rrahmani, Alioski, Pnishi, Aliti, Zeneli (Bernard Berisha 53), V Berisha, Kryeziu, Avdijaj (Rashica 74), Nuhiu. *Sent off: Bernard Berisha 84.*
Turkey: Volkan Babacan - Gokhan Gonul, Mehmet Topal, Caglar, Kaldirim (Ismail 85), Ozan, Selcuk Inan, Ozyakup (Yusuf 74), Cengiz, Burak, Volkan Sen (Mor 80).

OCEANIA section
3rd round

Group A

Jun 7 - Lautoka
Fiji 2 (Waqa 45+2, R Krishna 54)
New Caledonia 2 (Wamowe 13, 24)
HT: 1-2. **Att:** 1,500. **Ref:** Zitouni (Tah)
Fiji: Koroi - Sivoki, Tekiate, Makoe, Kautoga, Hughes (R Krishna 50), Naioko, Wasasala, Verevou (Radrigai 28), Waqa, Saukuru (Tabucava 28).
New Caledonia: Ulile - J Dokunengo, Kayara (Hnauk 90+3), E Bearune, J Wakanumune, Kauma, Gony, Wamowe, Athale, Welepane (Waia 61), Sele. *Sent off: E Bearune 70.*

Jun11 - Noumea
New Caledonia 2 (Ounei pen 44, Sele 73)
Fiji 1 (Saukuru 66)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 1,050. **Ref:** Hauata (Tah)
New Caledonia: Ulile - J Dokunengo, Kayara, J Wakanumune, Kauma, Walone (Wamytan 90), Sansot, Wamowe (Waia 75), Athale, Sele, Ounei (Welepane 69).
Fiji: Koroi - Tuilau, Tekiate, Makoe (Verevou 82), Rawaqa, Kautoga, Naioko (Radrigai 54), Tabucava, Wasasala, Waqa (R Krishna 52), Saukuru.

Group B
Jun 9 - Honiara
Solomon Islands 3 (Kaua 12, Totori 36, Lea'alafa 74)
Papua New Guinea 2 (Foster 48, Aisa 61)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 14,700. **Ref:** Gillett (Aus)
Solomon Islands: Mango - N Kilifa, Aengari, Laua, Bule (Bakale 70), Lea'alafa, Totori (Naka 68), Feni (Ofea 65), Waroi, Donga, Kaua.
Papua New Guinea: Warisan - F Komolong, Willis, Redenut, E Simon, Sabua, Foster, Browne (Bika 77), A Komolong, Gunemba, Aisa (Murray 82).

Jun13 - Port Moresby
Papua New Guinea 1 (Gunemba 18)
Solomon Islands 2 (Fa'arodo pen 33, Donga 45+2)
HT: 1-2. **Att:** 2,035. **Ref:** Iida (Jap)
Papua New Guinea: Warisan - F Komolong, Willis, Redenut (Gubag 90), E Simon, Sabua (Aisa 72), Foster, Browne, A Komolong, Dabinyaba (Bika 83), Gunemba. *Sent off: F Komolong 31.*
Solomon Islands: Mango - N Kilifa, Aengari, Laua (Hiromana 88), Fa'arodo, Lea'alafa, Totori, Feni, Waroi, Donga (Poila 65), Kaua (Bakale 46).

2019 ASIAN CUP QUALIFIERS

3rd round
Group A
Jun13 - Bangalore
India 1 (Chhetri 69)
Kyrgyzstan 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 6,213. **Ref:** Yamamoto (Jap)

Jun13 - Macau
Macau 0
Myanmar 4 (Si Thu Aung 4, 61, Kyaw Ko Ko 30, Min Min Thu 74)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 1,200. **Ref:** Kim Dae-yong (SKo)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
India	2	2	0	0	2	0	6
Myanmar	2	1	0	1	4	1	3
Kyrgyzstan	2	1	0	1	1	1	3
Macau	2	0	0	2	0	5	0

Group B
Jun13 - Hong Kong
Hong Kong 1 (Tan Chun Lok 45)
North Korea 1 (Kim Yu-song 46)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 8,194. **Ref:** Foo (Sin)

Jun13 - Johor Bahru
Malaysia 1 (Mahali 43)
Lebanon 2 (Ataya 80, 90+4)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 6,850. **Ref:** Abdulhusin (Bhn)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Lebanon	2	2	0	0	4	1	6
North Korea	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Hong Kong	2	0	1	1	1	3	1
Malaysia	1	0	0	1	1	2	0

Group C
Jun13 - Phnom Penh
Cambodia 1 (Mony Udom 60)
Afghanistan 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 40,000. **Ref:** Bonyadifard (Irn)

Jun13 - Ho Chi Minh City
Vietnam 0
Jordan 0
Att: 12,000. **Ref:** Ng (HK)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Jordan	2	1	1	0	7	0	4
Cambodia	2	1	0	1	1	7	3
Vietnam	2	0	2	0	1	1	2
Afghanistan	2	0	1	1	1	2	1

Group D
Jun13 - Thimphu
Bhutan 0
Maldives 2 (Fasir pen 42, Ahmed Abdulla 76)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 7,600. **Ref:** Khurram (Pak)

Jun13 - Al Ram
Palestine 2 (Cantillana 14, Pinto 21)
Oman 1 (Mubarak 45)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 11,000. **Ref:** Pu-Udom (Tha)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Palestine	2	2	0	0	5	1	6
Oman	2	1	0	1	15	2	3
Maldives	2	1	0	1	2	3	3
Bhutan	2	0	0	2	0	16	0

Group E
Jun10 - Singapore
Singapore 1 (Hariss 6)
Taiwan 2 (Xavier Chen 30, Chen Chao-an 60)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 5,234. **Ref:** Al Ali (Jor)

Jun13 - Dashoguz
Turkmenistan 1 (Yakshiyev 86)
Bahrain 2 (Al Romaihi 55, Yaser 79)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 9,500. **Ref:** Ma (Chn)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bahrain	2	1	1	0	2	1	4
Turkmenistan	2	1	0	1	4	3	3
Taiwan	2	1	0	1	3	4	3
Singapore	2	0	1	1	1	2	1

Group F
Jun13 - Kathmandu
Nepal 0
Yemen 0
Att: 700. **Ref:** Faizullin (Kyr)

Jun13 - Dushanbe
Tajikistan 3 (Umarbayev pen 57, Vasiev 61, M Dzhalilov 88)
Philippines 4 (P Younghusband 28, Patino 41, 48, Sato 79)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 15,000. **Ref:** Hattab (Syr)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Philippines	2	2	0	0	8	4	6
Yemen	2	1	1	0	2	1	4
Nepal	2	0	1	1	1	4	1
Tajikistan	2	0	0	2	4	6	0

● *The top 2 in each group will qualify for the 24-team finals (12 other countries have already qualified)*

2019 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP QUALS

Group A
Jun 9 - Al Ubayyid
Sudan 1 (El Tahir 73)
Madagascar 3 (Andriatsima 15, 82, Andriamahitsinoro pen 62)

Jun10 - Dakar
Senegal 3 (Sow 1, 72, Gueye 90+1)
Equatorial Guinea 0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Senegal	1	1	0	0	3	0	3
Madagascar	1	1	0	0	3	1	3
Sudan	1	0	0	1	1	3	0
Equat Guinea	1	0	0	1	0	3	0

Group B
Jun10 - Yaounde
Cameroon 1 (Aboubakar 28)
Morocco 0

Jun10 - Lilongwe
Malawi 1 (Phiri 30)
Comoros 0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Cameroon (Q)	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Malawi	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Comoros	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
Morocco	1	0	0	1	0	1	0

Cameroon have already qualified as finals hosts

Group C
Jun10 - Bujumbura
Burundi 3 (Amissi 12, Duhayindavyi 16, Abdul Razak 30)
South Sudan 0

Jun10 - Bamako
Mali 2 (K Coulibaly 54, Bissouma 57)
Gabon 1 (Bouanga 3)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Burundi	1	1	0	0	3	0	3
Mali	1	1	0	0	2	1	3
Gabon	1	0	0	1	1	2	0
South Sudan	1	0	0	1	0	3	0

Group D
Jun11 - Blida
Algeria 1 (Hanni 24)
Togo 0

Jun11 - Cotonou
Benin 1 (Sessegnon 53)
Gambia 0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Algeria	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Benin	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Gambia	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
Togo	1	0	0	1	0	1	0

Group E
Jun 9 - Cairo, Egypt
Libya 5 (Saltou 23, Benali pen 27, Elhouni 45, Zubya 66, Ellafi 84)
Seychelles 1 (Coralie 90+2)

Jun10 - Uyo
Nigeria 0
South Africa 2 (Rantie 54, Tau 80)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Libya	1	1	0	0	5	1	3
South Africa	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
Nigeria	1	0	0	1	0	2	0
Seychelles	1	0	0	1	1	5	0

Group F
Jun10 - Freetown
Sierra Leone 2 (Wobay 21, Bangura pen 70)
Kenya 1 (Olunga 75)
Sent off: Mandela (Kenya) 40

Jun11 - Kumasi
Ghana 5 (Gyan 10, Boye 14, Ofori 40, Dwamena 47, 59)
Ethiopia 0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ghana	1	1	0	0	5	0	3
Sierra Leone	1	1	0	0	2	1	3
Kenya	1	0	0	1	1	2	0
Ethiopia	1	0	0	1	0	5	0

Group G
Jun10 - Kinshasa
DR Congo 3 (Bakambu 20, 54, Mbemba 90)
Congo 1 (Bifouma 45+2)

Jun11 - Harare
Zimbabwe 3 (Musona 24, 49, 62)
Liberia 0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Zimbabwe	1	1	0	0	3	0	3
DR Congo	1	1	0	0	3	1	3
Congo	1	0	0	1	1	3	0
Liberia	1	0	0	1	0	3	0

Group H
Jun10 - Bouake
Ivory Coast 2 (Doumbia 14, 62)
Guinea 3 (A Diallo 32, Kamano 66, N Keita 79)

Jun11 - Bangui
Central African Republic 2 (Gourrier 47, Keita 90+4)
Rwanda 1 (Sugira 90+2)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Guinea	1	1	0	0	3	2	3
Cent Af Rep	1	1	0	0	2	1	3
Ivory Coast	1	0	0	1	2	3	0
Rwanda	1	0	0	1	1	2	0

Group I
Jun10 - Francistown
Botswana 0
Mauritania 1 (Soudani 78)

Jun10 - Ouagadougou
Burkina Faso 3 (Bance 21, pen 42, B Traore 79)
Angola 1 (Gelson 23)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Burkina Faso	1	1	0	0	3	1	3
Mauritania	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Botswana	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
Angola	1	0	0	1	1	3	0

Group J
Jun10 - Niamey
Niger 0
Swaziland 0

Jun11 - Rades
Tunisia 1 (Khenissi 48)
Egypt 0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Tunisia	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Niger	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Swaziland	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Egypt	1	0	0	1	0	1	0

Group K
Jun10 - Bissau
Guinea-Bissau 1 (Gomes 22)
Namibia 0

Jun10 - Ndola
Zambia 0
Mozambique 1 (Ratifo 90)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Mozambique	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Guinea-Bissau	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Namibia	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
Zambia	1	0	0	1	0	1	0

Group L
Jun10 - Dar es Salaam
Tanzania 1 (Samatta 27)
Lesotho 1 (Tale 34)

Jun11 - Praia
Cape Verde Islands 0
Uganda 1 (Sserunkuma 83)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Uganda	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Lesotho	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Tanzania	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Cape Verde Is	1	0	0	1	0	1	0

● *The12 group winners and the 3 runners-up with the best record will qualify for the16-team finals. Hosts Cameroon qualify automatically*

CARIBBEAN CUP

Played in Fort-de-France, Martinique

Semi-finals
Jun 22
Jamaica 1 (Jermaine Johnson 70)
French Guiana 1 (Loic Baal 21)
Aet. Jamaica 4-2 on pens
HT: 0-1. **90mins:** 1-1. **Att:** 5,200.
Ref: Da Costa (Bhm)
Sent off: Ritchie (Jamaica) 93

Jun 22
Curacao 2 (Nepomuceno pen 57, Janga 76)
Martinique 1 (Arquin 17)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 5,500. **Ref:** De Leca (Aru)

3rd-place match
Jun 25
French Guiana 1 (Privat 74)
Martinique 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 5,500. **Ref:** Moore (Guy)

Final
Jun 25
Jamaica 1 (Harriott 82)
Curacao 2 (Hooi 10, 84)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 5,200. **Ref:** Rodriguez (Cub)
Jamaica: Miller - Fisher, Lowe, Campbell, Francis (Harriott 36), Grandison, Lambert, Gordon, Binns, Jermaine Johnson (Morris 61), Burke (Nicholson 72).
Curacao: Room - Martina, Jakoba, Lachman, Justiana, Mulder, Bacuna, Nepomuceno, Antonia (Van Kessel 74), Hooi (Kortstam 90+2), Janga.

FRIENDLIES

Saturday, May 27
May 27 - Washington DC, USA
Honduras 2 (Puerto 4, R Martinez 45+2)
El Salvador 2 (Pineda 64, Zelaya 69)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 20,000. **Ref:** Escobar (Gtm)

May 27 - Los Angeles, USA
Mexico 1 (Javier Hernandez 87)
Croatia 2 (Cop 36, Tudor 37)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 62,317. **Ref:** Toledo (USA)
Mexico: Ochoa - Layun, D Reyes (Araujo 46), Moreno, L Reyes (Gallardo 81), Gutierrez (J Dos Santos 46), Herrera, E Hernandez (Vela 54), Molina (Guardado 46), Lozano, Peralta (Javier Hernandez 66).
Croatia: L Kalinic - Jedvaj, Nizic, Filipovic, Barisic, Sunjic, Skoric, Tudor (Kolinger 71), Vlasic (Milos 90), Cop (Majer 90+3), Santini (Katic 83). *Sent off: Skoric 77.*

Wednesday, May 31

May 31 - Empoli
Italy 8 (Lapadula 10, 20, 49, Cevoli og 13, Petagna 16, Caldara 48, Politano 58, Bonini og 65)
San Marino 0
HT: 4-0. **Att:** 6,000. **Ref:** Scharer (Swi)
Italy: Scuffet - Conti (Biraghi 70), Caldara, G Ferrari, D'Ambrosio, Gagliardini (Cataldi 46), Baselli (Pellegrini 46), Berardi (Politano 46), Lapadula, Chiesa (Caprari 62), Petagna (Falcinelli 46).
San Marino: Benedettini (A Simoncini 46) - Cesarini (Bonini 63), Cevoli (Mazza 71), Biordi (Stefanelli 87), Brolli, Hirsch, Cervellini, A Golinucci, M Vitaioli (Zafferani 62), Tosi (Alessandro Della Valle 56), Rinaldi.

May 31 - Agadir
Morocco 1 (Boussoufa 72)
Holland 2 (Promes 22, Janssen 68)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 25,000. **Ref:** Keita (Mli)
Morocco: El Kajoui - N Amrabat (En-Nesyri 85), Da Costa, Saiss, Dirar, El Ahmadi (Ait Bennasser 64), Boussoufa, Fajr (Bammou 90), Belhanda (Boutaib 77), Boufal (Carcela 60), Bouhaddouz (Azarou 46).
Holland: Zoet - Veltman, De Ligt, Hoedt, Ake, Toornstra (Sneijder 73), Vilhena, Berghuis (De Roon 46), Promes, Depay (Viergever 74), Janssen (Dost 73). Sent off: De Ligt 70.

Thursday, June 1

Jun1 - East Rutherford, USA
Mexico 3 (J M Corona 16, Jimenez pen 25, Vela 54)
Republic of Ireland 1 (Gleeson 77)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 42,017. **Ref:** Unkel (USA)
Mexico: Cota - Salcedo (Layun 46), D Reyes, Moreno (Alanis 46), Gallardo, Jorge Hernandez, Herrera (Peralta 46), J Dos Santos (Pineda 58), J M Corona (Aquino 58), Vela (Marquez 68), Jimenez.
Republic of Ireland: Randolph - Keogh, Duffy, Egan (K Long 64), Christie (Browne 73), Hourihane (O'Kane 64), McClean, Horgan (Gleeson 73), O'Dowda, McGoldrick, Murphy (Hoolahan 64).

Jun1 - Saint-Leu-la-Foret, France
Nigeria 3 (Musa 2, 18, Iheanacho 27)
Togo 0
HT: 3-0. **Att:** 1,000

Jun1 - Neuchatel
Switzerland 1 (Shaqiri 9)
Belarus 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 10,200. **Ref:** Prihoda (CzR)
Switzerland: Burki - Widmer (Hadergjonaj 46), Elvedi (Klose 46), Djourou (Xhaka 65), Moubandje, Behrami, Shaqiri, Freuler (Frei 46), E Fernandes (G Fernandes 65), Mehmedi, Zuber (Seferovic 65).
Belarus: Chernik - Dragun, Gordeichuk (Laptev 46), Skavysh (Bykov 46), Burko (Aliseiko 46), Legchilin (Savitskiy 46), Evdokimov (Matveichyk 46), Balanovich, Filipenko, Sachivko (Pavlovets 62), Sivakov.

Friday, June 2

Jun 2 - Santiago
Chile 3 (Vidal 10, 75, Sagal 86)
Burkina Faso 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 27,000. **Ref:** Abal (Arg)
Sent off: Drame (Burkina Faso) 45
Chile: Herrera - Isla (Fuenzalida 54), Roco, Maripan, Beausejour (Suazo 61), Vidal (Leiva 78), M Diaz (Hernandez 54), Aranguiz (Pinares 46), Puch (Valencia 67), Sagal, Rodriguez.

Jun 2 - Rennes
France 5 (Giroud 6, 13, 69, Sissoko 76, Griezmann 77)
Paraguay 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 28,256. **Ref:** Dias (Por)
France: Lloris - Sidibe, Koscielny, Umtiti, Mendy (Digne 67), Pogba (Kante 46), Matuidi, Dembele (Sissoko 46), Griezmann (Thauvin 80), Payet (Lemar 46), Giroud (Lacazette 73).
Paraguay: A Silva - Patino (Samudio 46), Gomez, B Valdez, Alonso, Iturbe (Ramirez 46), Ayala (Paredes 64), Aguilar, O Romero (Franco 77), Santander (Jorge Benitez 58), E Benitez (Diaz 46).

Jun 2 - Managua
Nicaragua 0
Bolivia 1 (Alvarez 58)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 8,500. **Ref:** Castro (Hnd)

Jun 2 - Belfast
Northern Ireland 1 (Boyce 6)
New Zealand 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 16,815. **Ref:** Kopriwa (Lux)
Northern Ireland: McGovern (Carroll 84) - C McLaughlin, J Evans, Flanagan, Hughes, Brunt (Ferguson 46), Norwood, Lund (Davis 46), Dallas (Paton 74), Boyce (K Lafferty 46), Magennis (McCartan 83).
New Zealand: Marinovic - Boxall, Durante, Smith, Colvey (Barbarouses 63), Lewis (Tuiloma 46), McGlinchey, Thomas (Smeltz 79), Doyle (Wynne 72), Rojas (Patterson 63), Wood.

Saturday, June 3

Jun 3 - Estoril
Portugal 4 (Joao Moutinho 3, 42, Pizzi 63, Andre Silva 70)
Cyprus 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 5,128. **Ref:** Massa (Ita)
Portugal: Rui Patricio - Cedric (Nelson Semedo 67), Luis Neto, Jose Fonte, Eliseu, Bernardo Silva (Gelson Martins 46), Joao Moutinho (Adrien Silva 46), Danilo Pereira (William Carvalho 46), Joao Mario (Andre Gomes 46), Andre Silva, Nani (Pizzi 60).
Cyprus: Georgallides - Demetriou (Stylianou 82), Katelaris, Laifis, Alexandrou (Ioannou 67), C Kyriakou (Mytidis 61), Artymatas, Margaca, Charalambides (Avraam 60), Sotiriou (Economides 67), Makris (Englezou 70).

Jun 3 - Sandy
United States 1 (Pulisic 61)
Venezuela 1 (Velazquez 29)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 17,315. **Ref:** Solis (CR)
United States: Howard - Yedlin (Zusi 90+1), Cameron (Gonzalez 46), Brooks (Hedges 56), Villafana, F Johnson (Ream 63), Bradley, Pulisic, Nagbe (Morris 70), Dempsey (Acosta 63), Wood.
Venezuela: Contreras - Camacho, Velazquez (Osorio 56), Villanueva, Quijada, Murillo (Vargas 89), F Flores, Moreno (La Mantia 83), Machis (Romero 67), S Rondon (Ponce 90+3), Santos (Savarino 72).

Sunday, June 4

Jun 4 - Yerevan
Armenia 5 (Koryan 20, Mkhitaryan 30, 40, Sarkisov 68, Artak Yedigaryan 89)
St Kitts & Nevis 0
HT: 3-0. **Ref:** Silagava (Geo)

Jun 4 - Rotterdam
Holland 5 (Veltman 13, 36, Robben pen 32, Klaassen 69, Janssen 75)
Ivory Coast 0
HT: 3-0. **Ref:** Lechner (Aut)
Holland: Cillessen - Tete, Veltman, Martins Indi, Blind, Propper (Wijnaldum 64), Klaassen (Sneijder 70), Strootman (Ramselaar 84), Robben (Promes 78), Janssen (Dost 77), Depay (Berghuis 77).
Ivory Coast: Sangare - Aurier, Traore (Bailly 46), Deli, Kanon (Ya Konan 71), Seri, Gbamin, Kessie (Diomande 62), Pepe (Gervinho 66), Sio (Cyriac 46), Cornet.

Jun 4 - Luxembourg
Luxembourg 2 (Turpel 63, Malget 75)
Albania 1 (Roshi 52)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 3,052. **Ref:** Marshall (NI)

Jun 4 - Podgorica
Montenegro 1 (Jovetic 32)
Iran 2 (Azmoun 11, 60)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 3,500. **Ref:** Jakimovski (Mac)
Montenegro: Petkovic - Klimenta, Savic (Basa 46), Simic, Tomasevic (Stojkovic 46), Jankovic (Kojasevic 64), Kosovic, Savicevic, Jovovic (Djordjevic 71), Beciraj (Vucinic 46), Jovetic (Mugosa 64).
Iran: Beiranvand - Rezaeian, Montazeri, Pouraliganji, Aghaei, Ezatolahi (Pourghaz 73), Hajsafi (Karimi 38), Dejagah (Ghoochannejhad 46), Torabi, Azmoun (Pahlevan 64), Ansarifard (Mohammadi 46). *Sent off: Pouraliganji 79.*

Jun 4 - Dublin
Republic of Ireland 3 (Walters 27, Christie 49, McClean 77)
Uruguay 1 (Gimenez 38)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 27,193. **Ref:** Thomson (Sco)
Republic of Ireland: Randolph (Westwood 46) - Christie, Duffy (Pearce 61), K Long, Ward, Whelan (Hoolahan 46), Arter, Brady, Hendrick (McClean 74), Hayes (McGeady 60), Walters (Murphy 61).
Uruguay: Conde - Gimenez, Coates, Caceres, M Pereira (Ricca 62), Vecino, Arevalo (A Gonzalez 46), Laxalt (A Silva 46), Sanchez (Nandez 46), Urretaviscaya, Cavani (Stuani 13).

Monday, June 5

Jun 5 - Brussels
Belgium 2 (Batshuayi 25, Fellaini 52)
Czech Republic 1 (Krmencik 29)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 28,000. **Ref:** Scharer (Swi)
Belgium: Courtois - Alderweireld, Kompany (Vermaelen 46), Vertonghen, Chadli, Tielemans (Fellaini 46), De Bruyne, Carrasco (T Hazard 87), Nainggolan (Mirallas 46), Batshuayi (Mertens 46), R Lukaku (Benteke 46).
Czech Republic: Vaclik (Pavlenka 33) - Kaderabek (Celustka 46), Kalas, Brabec, Gebre Selassie, Krejci (Jankto 46), Darida, Soucek, Zmrhal (Mares 77), Schick (Skoda 64), Krmencik (Dockal 46).

Jun 5 - Rabat, Morocco
DR Congo 2 (Afobe 48, Ngbakoto 55)
Botswana 0
HT: 0-0

Jun 5 - Budapest
Hungary 0
Russia 3 (Smolov 20, Eppel og 40, Poloz 89)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 12,000. **Ref:** Dingert (Ger)
Hungary: Gulacsi - Bese, Lang, Kadar (Vinicius 46), Hangya (Kleisz 46), Markvart, Nagy, Kalmar (Sallai 46), Dzsudzsak (Kleinheisler 70), Eppel (Balogh 70), Stieber (Gyurcso 75).
Russia: Akinfeev - Vasin, Dzhikiya (Shishkin 81), Kudryashov, Samedov (Smolnikov 76), Zobnin (Erokhin 33), Glushakov, Golovin, Zhirkov (Tarasov 88), Bukharov (Poloz 63), Smolov (Miranchuk 84).

Jun 5 - Monrovia
Liberia 1 (Jackson 79)
Sierra Leone 0
HT: 0-0

Jun 5 - Skopje
Macedonia 0
Turkey 0
Att: 7,000. **Ref:** Todorov (Bul)
Macedonia: Dimitrievski - Mojsov, Sikov, Ristevski, Ristovski (Toshevski 80), Stjepanovic, Spirovski (Trajchevski 90+1), Hasani (Trajkovski 62), Alioski, Pandev (Trickovski 71), Nestorovski (Ibraimi 83).
Turkey: Volkan Babacan - Gokhan Gonul, Ayhan, Caglar, Ismail (Kaldirim 46), Emre Colak (Burak 79), Ozan, Malli (Mor 61), Arda (Tosun 61), Sahan (Cengiz 46), Enes (Selcuk Inan 46).

Jun 5 - Dakar
Senegal 0
Uganda 0
Att: 21,000. **Ref:** Sallah (Gam)

Tuesday, June 6

Jun 6 - Dubai, UAE
Afghanistan 2 (Amin 35, Popalzai 62)
Maldives 1 (Fasir pen 38)
HT: 1-1

Jun 6 - Blida
Algeria 2 (Hanni 38, Soudani 78)
Guinea 1 (D Camara 59)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Belkhouas (Tun)

Jun 6 - Riffa
Bahrain 0
Palestine 2 (Salem 58, Maraaba 83)
HT: 0-0

Jun 6 - Brondby
Denmark 1 (Eriksen 18)
Germany 1 (Kimmich 88)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 15,488. **Ref:** Oliver (Eng)
Denmark: Ronnow - Larsen, A Christensen (M Jorgensen 46), Vestergaard, Durmisi (F Sorensen 66), Kvist (Schone 46), Eriksen (Lerager 65), Delanay, Y Poulsen (Vibe 76), N Jorgensen (Dolberg 76), Braithwaite.
Germany: Trapp - Sule, Rudiger, Ginter (Younes 66), Kimmich, Goretzka (Demirbay 78), Rudy (Can 59), Hector (Plattenhardt 88), Stindl, Draxler, Wagner (Brandt 66).

Jun 6 - Mumbai
India 2 (Jhingan 60, Lalpekhlua 78)
Nepal 0
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Banerjee (Ind)
Sent off: Maharjan (Nepal) 68

Jun 6 - Netanya
Israel 1 (Sahar pen 90+5)
Moldova 1 (Ginsari 51)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 5,000. **Ref:** Dankert (Ger)

Jun 6 - Graz, Austria
Ukraine 0
Malta 1 (Z Muscat 14)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 500. **Ref:** Harkam (Aut)
Ukraine: Pyatov - Kovalenko (Shepelyev 46), Kucher (Ordets 46), Rakitskyi (Kryvtsov 46), Matviyenko (Butko 46), Sydorchuk (Malyshev 46), Stepanenko (Shakhov 46), Yarmolenko (Konoplyanka 46), Malinovskyi (Tsyhankov 46), Morozyuk (Sobol 46), Seleznyov (Besedin 46).
Malta: Hogg (Bonello 46) - Agius, S Borg (Magri 90+2), Failla (Zerafa 57), Z Muscat (R Camilleri 46), S Pisani, R Fenech (Bezzina 82), Kristensen (D Camilleri 67), A Muscat (Beerman 90+2), Effiong (M Mifsud 70), Schembri (Gambin 60).

Jun 6 - Tashkent
Uzbekistan 2 (Abdukholikov 68, Rashidov 90+2)
Thailand 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 14,000. **Ref:** Kasimov (Uzb)

Wednesday, June 7

Jun 7 - Yacuiba
Bolivia 3 (Diego Bejarano 38, Alvarez 48, Vargas 90+2)
Nicaragua 2 (J Garcia 7, Chavarria 37)
HT: 1-2. **Att:** 17,000. **Ref:** Samaniego (Par)

Jun 7 - Guangzhou
China 8 (Ren Hang 3, Xiao Zhi 26, Yu Hanchao 44, Wang Yongpo 54, Yin Hongbo 56, Zhang Xizhe 68, Deng Hanwen 72, 90)
Philippines 1 (Bahadoran 33)
HT: 3-1. **Ref:** Zhang (Chn)

Jun 7 - Turku
Finland 1 (M Hetemaj 17)
Liechtenstein 1 (N Hasler 62)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 5,460. **Ref:** Al Hakim (Swe)

Jun 7 - Tbilisi
Georgia 3 (Arabidze 51, pen 73, Dvalishvili 80)
St Kitts & Nevis 0
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Hovhannisyan (Arm)

Jun 7 - Ras Al Khaimah, UAE
Iraq 0
South Korea 0
Att: 1,000. **Ref:** Al Hammadi (UAE)

Jun 7 - Nice, France
Italy 3 (Gimenez og 7, Eder 82, De Rossi pen 90+2)
Uruguay 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 17,000. **Ref:** Turpin (Fra)
Italy: Donnarumma - Darmian, Barzagli (Chiellini 78), Bonucci, Spinazzola, Candreva (Bernardeschi 58), De Rossi, Marchisio (Montolivo 18), Insigne (El Shaarawy 64), Belotti (Eder 46), Immobile (Gabbiadini 82).
Uruguay: Muslera - M Pereira (Corujo 82), Gimenez, Coates, Caceres, Gonzalez, Vecino, Sanchez (Stuani 46), Nandez, Urretaviscaya, Rolan (A Silva 73).

Jun 7 - Tokyo
Japan 1 (Konno 58)
Syria 1 (Mardikian 48)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 43,608. **Ref:** Stefanski (Pol)
Japan: Kawashima - Nagatomo, Yoshida, H Sakai, Shoji, Konno (Asano 63), Kagawa (Kurata 10), Yamaguchi (Ideguchi 53), Osako (Okazaki 85), Haraguchi (Inui 59), Kubo (Honda 46).

Jun 7 - Murcia
Spain 2 (Silva 22, Morata 87)
Colombia 2 (Cardona 40, Falcao 55)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 31,179. **Ref:** Vincic (Sln)
Spain: Reina - Azpilicueta, Pique (Deulofeu 56), Nacho, Jordi Alba (Saul 46), Koke, Illarramendi, Iniesta (Asensio 46), Silva (Monreal 46), Iago Aspas (Morata 56), Pedro (Vitolo 76).
Colombia: Ospina - Arias, D Sanchez (O Murillo 46), C Zapata, Armero, Aguilar (Torres 67), C Sanchez, Cuadrado (Izquierdo 88), Rodriguez (Muriel 80), Cardona (G Moreno 67), Falcao (Bacca 77).

Thursday, June 8

Jun 8 - Boca Raton, USA
Ecuador 1 (Villanueva og 29)
Venezuela 1 (Moreno 42)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 5,832. **Ref:** Unkel (USA)

Jun 8 - Trujillo
Peru 1 (Guerrero 75)
Paraguay 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 25,000. **Ref:** Orbe (Ecu)
Sent off: Rojas (Paraguay) 74

Friday, June 9

Jun 9 - Melbourne, Australia
Brazil 0
Argentina 1 (Mercado 45)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 95,569. **Ref:** Beath (Aus)
Brazil: Weverton - Fagner (Rafinha 73), Thiago Silva, Gil, Filipe Luis, Fernandinho, Paulinho (Giuliano 81), Renato Augusto (Douglas Costa 66), Philippe Coutinho, Willian, Gabriel Jesus (Taison 90+2).
Argentina: Romero - Otamendi, Maidana, Mercado (Mammana 75), J Gomez (Tagliafico 52), Biglia, Banega (Lanzini 81), Di Maria (Acuna 90+4), Messi, Dybala (Rodriguez 69), Higuain (Correa 46).

Jun 9 - Moscow
Russia 1 (Vasin 67)
Chile 1 (Isla 56)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 19,300. **Ref:** Gil Manzano (Spa)
Russia: Akinfeev - Smolnikov (Erokhin 66), Shishkin, Vasin, Kudryashov (Kambolov 81), Kombarov (Zhirkov 73), Samedov, Glushakov, Golovin, Miranchuk (Poloz 60), Smolov (Bukharov 86).
Chile: Herrera - Isla, Medel (P Diaz 63), Jara, Beausejour, Hernandez (Silva 77), Fuenzalida (Sanchez 55), Aranguiz (Gutierrez 74), Vidal (Pinares 81), Rodriguez, Vargas (Sagal 81).

Monday, June 12

Jun12 - Minsk
Belarus 1 (Polyakov 47)
New Zealand 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 2,000. **Ref:** Vilkov (Rus)

Jun12 - Riga
Latvia 1 (D Ikaunieks 22)
Estonia 2 (Zenjov 52, Purje 77)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 3,157. **Ref:** Levnikov (Rus)

Tuesday, June 13

Jun13 - Melbourne
Australia 0
Brazil 4 (Diego Souza 1, 90+3, Thiago Silva 62, Taison 75)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 49,874. **Ref:** Clattenburg (Eng)
Australia: Langerak - Sainsbury (Irvine 57), Wright (D McGowan 78), Degenek, Kruse, Behich, Milligan, Leckie (Hrustic 57), Luongo (Mooy 78), Troisi (Rogic 79), Cahill (Maclaren 57).
Brazil: Diego Alves - Rafinha, Thiago Silva (Jemerson 78), Rodrigo Caio, Alex Sandro, David Luiz (Fernandinho 73), Paulinho (Renato Augusto 83), Giuliano (Rodriguinho 78), Philippe Coutinho (Willian 71), Douglas Costa (Taison 59), Diego Souza.

Jun13 - Getafe, Spain
Cameroon 0
Colombia 4 (Rodriguez 16, Mina 30, 52, Izquierdo 85)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 7,000. **Ref:** Hernandez (Spa)
Cameroon: Onana - Guihoata, Owona, Teikeu (Mabouka 46), Ngwem, Mandjeck, Zambo Anguissa (Ngamaleu 46), Boumale, Moukandjo (Djoum 46), Toko Ekambi, Ndip Tambe.
Sent off: Ndip Tambe 47.
Colombia: Ospina (Vargas 61) - Arias (Medina 77), Mina, C Zapata, Fabra, C Sanchez (Gutierrez 46), Barrios, Cuadrado (Aguilar 77), Rodriguez, G Moreno (Izquierdo 61), Borja (Falcao 46).

Jun13 - Montreal
Canada 2 (James 45, Jackson-Hamel 87)
Curacao 1 (Janga 43)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 6,026. **Ref:** Unkel (USA)

Jun13 - Harrison, USA
Ecuador 3 (Cifuentes 18, E Valencia 51, Gaibor pen 79)
El Salvador 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 2,000. **Ref:** Toledo (USA)
Sent off: Molina (El Salvador) 77

Jun13 - Paris
France 3 (Umtiti 22, Sidibe 43, Dembele 78)
England 2 (Kane 9, pen 48)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 75,000. **Ref:** Massa (Ita)
France: Lloris - Sidibe (Jallet 89), Varane, Umtiti, Mendy (Digne 21), Dembele, Kante, Pogba, Lemar, Giroud (Koscielny 52), Mbappe.
Sent off: Varane 47.
England: Heaton (Butland 46) - Jones (Cresswell 81), Cahill, Stones, Trippier (Lallana 76), Dier, Oxlade-Chamberlain, Bertrand (Walker 46), Sterling, Kane, Alli.

Jun13 - Oslo
Norway 1 (M Elyounoussi 45)
Sweden 1 (Armenteros 82)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 11,940. **Ref:** Stefanski (Pol)
Norway: Nyland - Svensson, Nordtveit (Valsvik 46), Hovland, Flo, M Elyounoussi, Trondsen, Berge (Selnaes 46), Daehli (Aleesami 83), Johnsen (T Elyounoussi 56), Soderlund (Omoijuanfo 46).
Sweden: Nordfeldt - Krafth, P Jansson (J Johansson 69), Helander, Hult, Claesson, Sebastian Larsson, Hiljemark (Rohden 69), Sam Larsson (Forsberg 69), Guidetti (Armenteros 69), Nyman.

Jun13 - Arequipa
Peru 3 (Flores 21, Tapia 43, Guerrero 58)
Jamaica 1 (Jermaine Johnson pen 87)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 40,000. **Ref:** Murillo (Col)

Jun13 - Cluj-Napoca
Romania 3 (Stancu 31, Stanciu 60, Baluta 83)
Chile 2 (Vargas 8, Valencia 18)
HT: 1-2. **Att:** 11,000. **Ref:** Nijhuis (Hol)
Romania: Pantilimon - Benzar (Ivan 46), Chiriches, Tosca, Ganea (Tiru 70), Pintilii, Marin (Grozav 46), Hanca, Stanciu (Bicfalvi 86), Stancu (Baluta 66), Andone (Rotariu 46).
Chile: Herrera - P Diaz, Medel, Roco, Mena (Rodriguez 89), Aranguiz (Vidal 54), M Diaz (Silva 55), Gutierrez (Fuenzalida 83), Valencia (Isla 46), Vargas (Puch 65), Sanchez.
Sent off: Medel 33.

Jun13 - Singapore
Singapore 0
Argentina 6 (Fazio 25, Correa 31, A Gomez 61, Paredes 74, Alario 90, Di Maria 90+3)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 28,044. **Ref:** Kimura (Jap)
Argentina: Guzman - Mammana, Biglia (Banega 46), Fazio, Salvio, Lanzini (Paredes 60), Acuna, Di Maria, Dybala, A Gomez (Fernandez 70), Correa (Alario 46).

Jun13 - Moruleng
South Africa 1 (Manyama 23)
Zambia 2 (Mwila 72, Mundia 79)
HT: 1-0

Other friendlies in brief

Apr 26: Martinique 4 Guadeloupe 1.
Apr 29: Grenada 2 Trinidad & Tobago 2.
May 6: St Kitts & Nevis 2 Barbados 1.
May 17: Guadeloupe 2 Dominica 2.
May 25: Fiji 1 Solomon Islands 1.
May 26: Swaziland 1 Lesotho 0.
May 28: Fiji 1 Solomon Islands 0; Swaziland 0 Lesotho 1.
Jun 1: Iraq 1 Jordan 0.
Jun 2: Oman 1 Syria 1.
Jun 3: Ethiopia 0 Uganda 0.
Jun 4: Gabon 0 Zambia 0; Lesotho 1 Mauritania 0; Togo 2 Comoros 0.
Jun 6: Qatar 2 North Korea 2.
Jun 7: Hong Kong 0 Jordan 0; UAE 4 Laos 0.
Jun 8: Cambodia 0 Indonesia 2; Grenada 2 Bermuda 2.
Jun 10: Grenada 1 Bermuda 2.
Jun 13: Indonesia 0 Puerto Rico 0.
Jun 17: Curacao 0 Nicaragua 0; French Guiana 3 Barbados 0.

UNDER-20 WORLD CUP

Played in South Korea

Group A

May 20: Argentina 0 England 3; South Korea 3 Guinea 0.
May 23: England 1 Guinea 1; South Korea 2 Argentina 1.
May 26: England 1 South Korea 0; Guinea 0 Argentina 5.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
England (Q)	3	2	1	0	5	1	7
Sth Korea (Q)	3	2	0	1	5	2	6
Argentina	3	1	0	2	6	5	3
Guinea	3	0	1	2	1	9	1

Group B

May 20: Venezuela 2 Germany 0; Vanuatu 2 Mexico 3.
May 23: Venezuela 7 Vanuatu 0; Mexico 0 Germany 0.
May 26: Mexico 0 Venezuela 1; Germany 3 Vanuatu 2.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Venezuela (Q)	3	3	0	0	10	0	9
Mexico (Q)	3	1	1	1	3	3	4
Germany (Q)	3	1	1	1	3	4	4
Vanuatu	3	0	0	3	4	13	0

Group C

May 21: Zambia 2 Portugal 1; Iran 1 Costa Rica 0.
May 24: Zambia 4 Iran 2; Costa Rica 1 Portugal 1.
May 27: Costa Rica 1 Zambia 0; Portugal 2 Iran 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Zambia (Q)	3	2	0	1	6	4	6
Portugal (Q)	3	1	1	1	4	4	4
Costa Rica (Q)	3	1	1	1	2	2	4
Iran	3	1	0	2	4	6	3

Group D

May 21: South Africa 1 Japan 2; Italy 0 Uruguay 1.
May 24: South Africa 0 Italy 2; Uruguay 2 Japan 0.
May 27: Uruguay 0 South Africa 0; Japan 2 Italy 2.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Uruguay (Q)	3	2	1	0	3	0	7
Italy (Q)	3	1	1	1	4	3	4
Japan (Q)	3	1	1	1	4	5	4
South Africa	3	0	1	2	1	4	1

Group E

May 22: France 3 Honduras 0; Vietnam 0 New Zealand 0.
May 25: France 4 Vietnam 0; New Zealand 3 Honduras 1.
May 28: New Zealand 0 France 2; Honduras 2 Vietnam 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
France (Q)	3	3	0	0	9	0	9
N Zealand (Q)	3	1	1	1	3	3	4
Honduras	3	1	0	2	3	6	3
Vietnam	3	0	1	2	0	6	1

Group F

May 22: Ecuador 3 United States 3; Saudi Arabia 0 Senegal 2.
May 25: Ecuador 1 Saudi Arabia 2; Senegal 0 United States 1.
May 28: Senegal 0 Ecuador 0; United States 1 Saudi Arabia 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
USA (Q)	3	1	2	0	5	4	5
Senegal (Q)	3	1	1	1	2	1	4
S Arabia (Q)	3	1	1	1	3	4	4
Ecuador	3	0	2	1	4	5	2

● *The top 2 in each group and the 4 3rd-placed teams with the best record qualified for the1st knockout round (last16)*

1st knockout round (last 16)

May 30: Venezuela 1 Japan 0 (aet); South Korea 1 Portugal 3.
May 31: Uruguay 1 Saudi Arabia 0; England 2 Costa Rica 1; Zambia 4 Germany 3 (aet).
Jun 1: Mexico 1 Senegal 0; France 1 Italy 2; United States 6 New Zealand 0.

Quarter-finals

Jun 4: Venezuela 2 United States 1 (aet); Portugal 2 Uruguay 2 (aet, Uruguay 5-4 on pens).
Jun 5: Italy 3 Zambia 2 (aet); Mexico 0 England 1.

Semi-finals

Jun 8: Uruguay 1 Venezuela 1 (aet, Venezuela 4-3 on pens); Italy 1 England 3.

3rd-place match

Jun 11: Uruguay 0 Italy 0 (Italy 4-1 on pens).

Final

Jun11 - Suwon
Venezuela 0
England 1 (Calvert-Lewin 34)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 30,346. **Ref:** Kuipers (Hol)
Venezuela: Farinez - R Hernandez, Ferraresi, Velasquez, J Hernandez, Cordova (Sosa 72), Herrera, Lucena, Penaranda (Hurtado 90+3), Chacon (Soteldo 51), Pena.
England: Woodman - Kenny, Tomori, Clarke-Salter, Walker-Peters, Cook, Onomah, Dowell (Ojo 62), Solanke, Lookman (Maitland-Niles 76), Calvert-Lewin.

KEY TO TABLES
(Q) = qualified for next stage

JULY 2017 Vol 57 No 12

EDITOR Gavin Hamilton
ASSISTANT EDITOR Nich Hills
DESIGN DIRECTOR Kevin Eason
DESIGN EDITOR Jamie Latchford
DEPUTY DESIGN EDITOR Daniel Franklin
PICTURE EDITOR Duncan Bond
EDITORIAL SECRETARY Leeanne Wright

PICTURES
Pictures copyright: Getty Images, Press Association Images

Thanks this issue to
Dean Chillmaid, Peter Neish

EDITORIAL
Pinehurst 2, Pinehurst Road, Farnborough Business Park, Farnborough, Hants GU14 7BF
Email: world_soccer@timeinc.com
General enquries: +44 (0) 1252 555213

ADVERTISING AND SPONSORSHIP
Matthew Johnston
Tel: +44 (0) 1252 555367
Email: matthew.johnston@timeinc.com

PRODUCTION MANAGER Becky Singleton
MANAGING DIRECTOR Simon Owen
GROUP MANAGING DIRECTOR Oswin Grady

International licensing enquiries
+44 (0) 20 314 85490
Email: bianca.hamilton-foster@timeinc.com

SUBSCRIPTIONS ORDER HOTLINE
+44 (0)333 333 1113
Lines open Mon-Sat, 8am-6pm, UK time
US toll free: 1 888 313 5528
Lines open Mon-Sat 7am-12 Mid Central Time
or visit magazinesdirect.com

SUBSCRIPTIONS RATES
Annual sub is for 12 months (13 issues, prices include postage) UK: £66.79 Europe/Eire (inc. VAT): 98.85 euros (airmail) USA: $144.48 (airmail) Rest of world: £99.25 (airmail)

Periodicals paid at Rahway, NJ Postmaster: send address changes to *World Soccer*, c/o MAIL America, 365 Blair Road, Avenel NJ 07001, USA. USPS004075

SUBSCRIPTIONS DEPARTMENT
WORLD SOCCER SUBSCRIPTIONS
PO Box 20501, 1001 NM Amsterdam
The Netherlands
Tel: +44 (0) 330 333 1113

● A Bola (Portugal) ● De Telegraaf (Holland)
● ElfVoetbal (Holland) ● Fanatik (Turkey)
● Frankfurter Allgemeine (Germany)
● Goal News (Greece) ● Kicker (Germany)
● Marca (Spain) ● Nemzeti Sport (Hungary)
● So Foot (France) ● Sport-Express (Russia)
● Sport/Foot (Belgium) ● TIPS Bladet (Denmark)
● World Soccer (UK)

World Soccer's GREAT MATCHES

JUNE 29, 1958, STOCKHOLM: WORLD CUP FINAL

Brazil 5 Sweden 2

Garrincha and a teenage Pele star as Brazil make history and win World Cup for the first time

Equaliser...Garrincha crosses for Vava (no20) to score

The 1958 World Cup Final in Sweden set many records: the first time a non-European team had won the tournament in Europe; the first occasion a Final had been played between teams from different continents; the most goals scored in a Final; the biggest winning margin; the oldest player, Nils Liedholm, to score in a Final. And then, of course, there was also the youngest player to score in a Final, Pele.

At 17 years and 249 days old, Edson Arantes di Nascimento made the world sit up and take notice of his incredible talent. However, Pele wasn't the best player on the pitch – that accolade went to Garrincha, the "little bird" on the right wing for Brazil, who set up the first two goals as well as hitting a post and having a shot tipped onto the crossbar.

Managed by an Englishman, George Raynor, the host nation went ahead after just three minutes through Liedholm, who was 102 days short of his 36th birthday. But with Garrincha on fire, Brazil were soon back in the game and led at half-time with Vava applying the finishing touch from close range to two almost identical Garrincha crosses.

Ten minutes into the second-half, Pele produced a wonderful piece of skill to extend Brazil's lead, flicking the ball over a defender inside the penalty area and meeting the dropping ball with a first-time volley beyond Swedish goalkeeper Kalle Svensson.

Rising star...17-year-old Pele (right)

Mario Zagallo, who worked tirelessly up and down the left flank, scored Brazil's fourth before Agne Simonsson, set up by Gunnar Gren, reduced the arrears with 10 minutes remaining.

But Pele still had one final offering and combined with Zagallo to score a fifth goal as Brazil claimed the World Cup for the first time. WS

Referee: Guigue (Fra)

KEY MOMENTS

Quick start...Sweden's Nils Liedholm (left)

3min Sweden's Nils Liedholm collects a pass from Gunnar Gren and skips past several challenges before firing past Gilmar. **0-1**

7min Lennart Skoglund's goal-bound shot beats Gilmar but Mario Zagallo clears off the line.

9min Garrincha crosses and Vava taps in from close range. **1-1**

18min Garrincha beats two defenders and shoots right-footed across the goal but hits a post.

32min Another low cross from Garrincha into the six-yard box is met by a sliding Vava. **2-1**

55min Pele flicks the ball over Bengt Gustavsson and volleys past Kalle Svensson. **3-1**

61min Garrincha's chip is turned onto the crossbar by Svensson.

68min Sweden fail to clear a corner and Zagallo puts the ball home. **4-1**

Fourth...Mario Zagallo

80min Gren's pass finds Agne Simonsson, who beats Gilmar from close range. **4-2**

90min Pele flicks the ball to Zagallo before running into the box and rising above the defence to meet the return cross with a looping header into the corner. **5-2**

Waving...Pele scores in the last minute

NEXT MONTH AUGUST ISSUE ON SALE AUGUST 11

“Art of Football bring out
the beauty in the game's most
memorable moments” Copa90

“Art of Football capture classic
moments in a vibrant,
contemporary style” The Guardian

“Art of Football get it.
those split-second moments
are treasured memories and their
artwork captures them in a
classy and stylish way" Ball Street

“Art of Football's shirts capture
the vibrancy of the game
like no other” Dirty Tackle

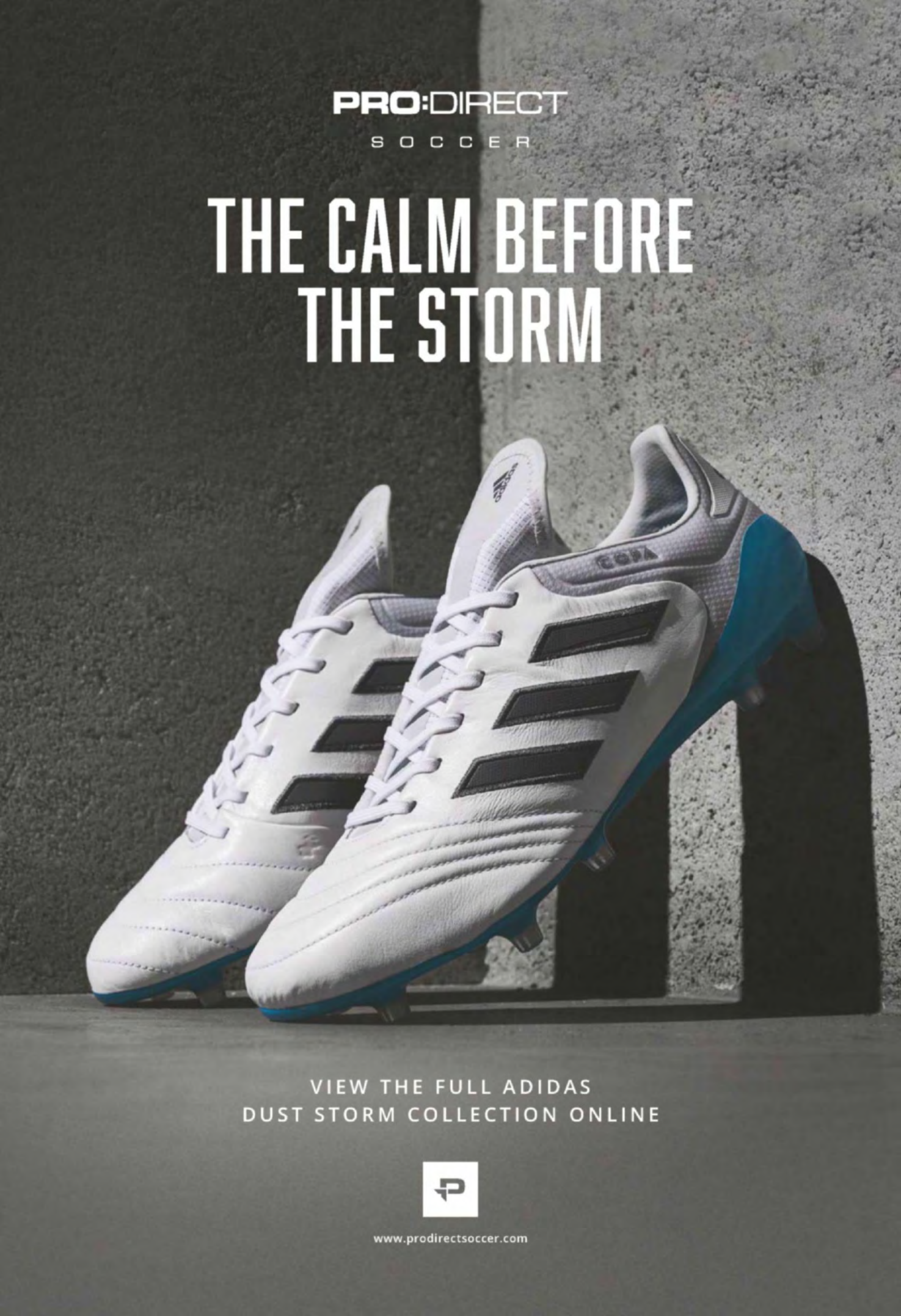
“Art of Football - where the
beautiful game comes to life”
Hitesh Ratna, Editor, FourFourTwo

“The Art of Football team create
truly unique and authentic content
that is designed to emotionally connect
real fans to the biggest moments
in the game” Adidas Uk

Art-of-football.com

PRO:DIRECT
SOCCER

THE CALM BEFORE THE STORM



VIEW THE FULL ADIDAS
DUST STORM COLLECTION ONLINE

www.prodirectsoccer.com